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THESIS

**COMBATING DAESH:
A SOCIALLY UNCONVENTIONAL STRATEGY**

by

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June 2015

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The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, commonly referred to as Daesh, has taken the world by storm and is exhibiting no signs of relenting. Desperate to degrade and ultimately destroy Daesh, yet afraid to mire itself in another Middle Eastern conflict, the United States is relying on a minimalist strategy through military partnerships and air support. This research contends that this fairly conventional approach is ineffective. This thesis offers an alternative strategy to counter Daesh by utilizing social network analysis (SNA) to analyze Daesh's network and then apply principles of social movement theory (SMT) to encourage Daesh's implosion.

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**COMBATING DAESH:
A SOCIALLY UNCONVENTIONAL STRATEGY**

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

The Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, commonly referred to as Daesh, has taken the world by storm and is exhibiting no signs of relenting. Desperate to degrade and ultimately destroy Daesh, yet afraid to mire itself in another Middle Eastern conflict, the United States is relying on a minimalist strategy through military partnerships and air support. This research contends that this fairly conventional approach is ineffective. This thesis offers an alternative strategy to counter Daesh by utilizing social network analysis (SNA) to analyze Daesh's network and then apply principles of social movement theory (SMT) to encourage Daesh's implosion.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ARSOF	Army Special Operations Forces
AOC	Army Operating Concept
AQ	al-Qaeda
AQI	al-Qaeda in Iraq
CENTCOM	Central Command
CF	Conventional Forces
DOD	Department of Defense
GOI	Government of Iraq
IBC	Iraqi Body Count
IOPE	Intelligence and Operations Preparation of the Environment
IPB	Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield
IRC	Iraq Regional Command
IS	Islamic State
ISIS	Islamic State of Iraq and Syria
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
ISI	Islamic State of Iraq
IW	Irregular Warfare
JIIM	Joint, Interagency, Intergovernmental, Multinational
LTC	Lieutenant Colonel
LTG	Lieutenant General
MCO	Major Combat Operations
MSOF	Moderate Syrian Opposition Forces
NCR	National Capital Region
OACOK	Observation/Fields of Fire, Avenues of Approach, Cover and Concealment, Obstacles, Key Terrain
OE	Operational Environment
OPE	Operational Preparation of the Environment
RC	Regional Command
RRI	Revolutionaries, Resistance, and Insurgents
SME	Social Media Exploitation
SMT	Social Movement Theory
SNA	Social Network Analysis
SOF	Special Operations Forces
SRC	Syria Regional Command
T&E	Training and Equipping
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
TTP	Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures
USASOC	United States Army Special Operations Command
USSF	United States Special Forces
UW	Unconventional Warfare
UWOA	Unconventional Warfare Operational Area
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

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I. ISLAMIC STATE: AN ALTERNATIVE PERSPECTIVE

A. INTRODUCTION

The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), locally referred to as *ad-Dawlah al-Islāmīyah fī al-'Irāq wash-Shām,* or Daesh,[1] has reportedly executed 1,969 civilians in Syria alone between June 28, 2014 and December 27, 2014 according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights.[2] Iraqi Body Count (IBC) attributes 4,325 civilian deaths to Daesh in 2014, contributing to the highest total casualty numbers seen in Iraq since 2006–2007. In reality, these numbers are likely much higher; however, accurate reporting from war-torn regions is difficult at best.[3] Beyond the caliphate's self-designated borders, Daesh-sanctioned lone-wolf operations have claimed lives in Canada, France, Norway, and Australia. At the time of this writing, there appears to be no end in sight to the violence as Daesh continues to call for attacks on *kuffar*, or non-believers.

Some argue that the United States unwittingly created Daesh as a result of a poor foreign policy with blatant misinformation from the Bush Administration to drag the United States into a war against Saddam Hussein,[4] while others argue that President Obama's weak foreign policy has allowed Daesh to flourish following the 2011 American troop withdraw from Iraq.[5] The correct answer is likely a combination of the two; however, neither argument is prescriptively relevant. Dwelling on past foreign policy blunders does little, if anything, to alter the present and will certainly not help in

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1 The U.S. administration uses the acronym ISIL. Elsewhere, such as in the mainstream media, it is referred to as the Islamic State (IS) or the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS). It is commonly referred to as Daesh in the Middle East. This thesis elects to use the Middle Eastern term Daesh.

2 Sohranas, "More than 1200 Civilians Executed by IS since the Declaration of Its Own 'Caliphate,'" *Syrian Observatory For Human Rights*, February 28, 2015, accessed March 4, 2015. http://syriahr.com/en/2015/02/more-than-1200-civilians-executed-by-is-since-the-declaration-of-its-own-caliphate/.

3 "Iraq 2014: Civilian Deaths Almost Doubling Year on Year," *Iraq Body Count*, January 1, 2015, accessed on March 3, 2015. https://www.iraqbodycount.org/analysis/numbers/2014/.

4 *VICE News*. How the US Created the Islamic State: Talking Heads, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GU2avVIHde8&feature=youtube_gdata_player.

5 Conrad Black, "Obama's ISIS Strategy Is Weak," *National Review Online*, September 14, 2014, accessed on March 3, 2015. http://www.nationalreview.com/article/387961/obamas-isis-strategy-weak-conrad-black.

defeating Daesh; instead, it only serves to polarize domestic politics. In the meanwhile, Daesh will persist. It will continue to preach its extreme version of Sunni Islam, recruit disenfranchised Muslim youths seeking a purpose in life, and perpetuate worldwide violence. While domestic issues will become an inevitable distraction, developing an effective strategy to defeat Daesh cannot be thought of as the next administration's problem. This begs the question, "Is the current strategy of United States-led air strikes supporting the training and equipping (T&E) of Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and moderate Syrian opposition forces (MSOF) an effective strategy in 'degrading and ultimately destroying'[6] Daesh?"

While many in the National Capital Region (NCR) believe the current strategy will eventually lead to Daesh's defeat, this study argues that this strategy is not only ineffective but actually strengthens Daesh's strategic position, making it even more difficult to defeat. The Daesh problem-set is one the United States has yet to encounter, and may therefore require a new, more innovative strategy.

B. SCOPE AND PURPOSE

This thesis addresses the Daesh problem-set not from a traditional military perspective, but through a social science lens where human dynamics serve as the compelling force behind strategy development. It first examines key principles of social movement theory (SMT) that drive the motivations and preconditions required of mobilization and collective action. It then attempts to map out the Daesh network through social media exploitation (SME) and conduct detailed analysis utilizing social network analysis (SNA) to illuminate critical actors, relationships, and structural dynamics within Daesh. With a more informed understanding of the overall Daesh network, it then applies SMT principles in an attempt to influence the caliphate's population into collective action, precipitating Daesh's implosion.

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6 Barack Obama, "President Obama: 'We Will Degrade and Ultimately Destroy ISIL'" Accessed September 17, 2014. http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/09/10/president-obama-we-will-degrade-and-ultimately-destroy-isil.

C. THE PROBLEM

Following the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, Abu Mus'ab al-Zarqawi, the Jordanian insurgent who created *Tawhid wa al-Jihad*, pledged *bayat*, or allegiance, to Osama bin Laden and became al-Qaeda's (AQ) official militant organization in Iraq, known as al-Qaeda in Iraqi (AQI).[7] Al-Zarqawi's death in 2006 left vacant AQI's top leadership position, allowing Abu Omar al-Baghdadi's to assume the mantle. After rebranding AQI into the Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), it suffered a rash of defeats at the hands of Iraqi Sunnis supported by U.S. forces during the 2007 *Shawa*, or Sunni Awakening, forcing ISI to take refuge in Syria.[8] Abu Omar's death in 2010 allowed a relatively unknown man, Abu Bakr al-Baghadi, to become the next *emir*, or leader, of ISI.[9] Under his leadership in Syria, free from American targeting and masked by the chaos of the Syrian civil war, ISI broke ties with al-Qaeda and established itself as the preeminent jihadi organization,[10] changing its name again to the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS). It then embarked on a deliberate campaign to weaken the Iraqi Sunni population that sided with American forces and the Government of Iraq (GOI) through systematic attacks on state infrastructure, such as prison systems, law enforcement, and judicial personnel.[11] The 2014 invasion and subsequent takeover of Mosul, Iraq, proved to be the catalyst needed for al-Baghdadi to formally announce the caliphate, with al-Baghdadi serving as the caliph, and ultimately declaring it the Islamic State.[12]

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7 "What Is Islamic State?" *BBC News*, September 26, 2014, accessed on December 18, 2014. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29052144.

8 Jessica D. Lewis, "Al-Qaeda in Iraq Resurgent," *Institute for the Study of War*, September 2013. http://www.understandingwar.org/report/al-qaeda-iraq-resurgent.

9 Graeme Baker, "The Fierce Ambition of ISIL's Baghdadi," *Al Jazeera*, June 15, 2014, accessed on February 26, 2015. http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/fierce-ambition-isil-baghdadi-2014612142242188464.html.

10 Raed Omari, "ISIS: Rapid Transformation from Militia to State," *Al Arabiya English*, July 27, 2014, accessed on February 25, 2015. http://english.alarabiya.net/en/views/news/middle-east/2014/07/27/ISIS-Rapid-transformation-from-militia-to-state.html.

11 Craig Whiteside, "War, Interrupted, Part I: The Roots of the Jihadist Resurgence in Iraq," *War on the Rocks*, November 5, 2014, accessed on February 26, 2015. http://warontherocks.com/2014/11/war-interrupted-part-i-the-roots-of-the-jihadist-resurgence-in-iraq/.

12 "What Is Islamic State?" *BBC News*.

1.   Current U.S. Strategy

The current U.S. strategy to combat Daesh, Operation INHERENT RESOLVE, rests on the shoulders of special operations forces (SOF), aviators from around the world, and a strong international coalition.[13] SOF advisors are not in direct combat roles, but rather train and equip ISF, Kurdish forces, and MSOF in traditional and urban warfare in the hopes of building war-fighting capabilities to oust Daesh from its Iraqi and Syrian strongholds. Aviators conduct daily air strikes targeting Daesh ground forces, as reported by the U.S Central Command (CENTCOM) homepage[14]—providing a "body-count-like" metric with which to measure progress. The international coalition provides limited air support, personnel, equipment, humanitarian aid, and funding.[15] Altogether, more than 60 nations spanning regional borders and religious boundaries are working in concert to degrade and ultimately destroy Daesh.

2.   Reanalyzing the Problem through an Alternative Framework

> No problem can be solved from the same level of consciousness that created it.
>
> —Albert Einstein

The United States' excellence in conventional warfare is widely accepted. Its power projection capabilities and successful implementation of maneuver warfare have been witnessed throughout the world, as demonstrated by the United States' swift victories in Grenada's Operation URGENT FURY in 1983, Iraq's Operation DESERT STORM in 1991, the Taliban defeat during Operation ENDURING FREEDOM in 2001, and Baghdad's capture during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM in 2003. Where the United States excels in conventional warfare, it falters in alternative forms of warfare—

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13 Tanya Somanader, "5 Things to Know: The President Lays Out the U.S. Plan to Degrade and Destroy ISIL," The White House, September 17, 2014, accessed on February 26, 2015. http://www.whitehouse.gov/blog/2014/09/17/president-lays-out-us-plan-degrade-and-destroy-isil.

14 United States Central Command, accessed February 26, 2015. http://www.centcom.mil/.

15 Colin Freeman, "Who Is in the Anti-Islamic State Coalition and What They Are Contributing?" *The Telegraph*, September 26, 2014, accessed on February 26, 2015. http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/middleeast/syria/11124070/Who-is-in-the-anti-Islamic-State-coalition-and-what-they-are-contributing.html.

counterinsurgency warfare in Vietnam and Operation IRAQI FREEDOM post 2004 serve as examples. While some may point to the U.S. victory in the Cold War as a success in alternative forms of warfare, recent events in Georgia, Crimea, and the Ukraine suggest the Cold War may never have truly ended. The U.S. Army recognizes this deficiency and has restructured its Army Operating Concept to better address warfare in the 21st century.[16] This conceptual force restructuring, however, is still years from becoming operational. In the meantime, the current dilemma involving Daesh represents an opportunity for the United States to utilize its current force structure to execute an alternative form of warfare, that of Irregular Warfare (IW).

D.   ASSUMPTIONS

This thesis is predicated on three assumptions. First, a full-scale military invasion against Daesh is neither advisable nor plausible. In the wake of two significant wars in which the United States spent vast amounts of treasure and blood, U.S. popular support of another large-scale, protracted conflict is low. Economically, the United States does not have the financial resources required to sustain a wholesale military effort to quell Daesh. Furthermore, as seen in both Iraq and Afghanistan, nation-building is too time-consuming and cost-prohibitive to defeat Daesh then rebuild Iraq and Syria into viable governing states.[17]

It is reasonable to assume that Daesh is not internally homogeneous and that there is discontent within its territorial control.[18] When Daesh declared its caliphate in late June 2014, there were factions throughout the Muslim world that did not accept it. Additionally, Daesh's brutal controlling tactics have alienated swathes of Iraqis and Syrians, creating a fragile state held together through repression and violence. It appears Daesh's premature caliphate declaration has created a number of potential anti-Daesh groups, or fissures, throughout the region.

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16 Chapter III discusses the new Army Operating Concept in detail.

17 Micah Zenko, "The Slippery Slope of U.S. Intervention," *Foreign Policy*, August 11, 2014. http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/08/11/the_slippery_slope_of_us_intervention_iraq_islamic_state_humanitarian_intervention.

18 Robert S. Ford, "The Fractured Caliphate," *Foreign Policy*, July 7, 2014. http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2014/07/07/the_fractured_caliphate_isis_iraq_sunni_awakening.

Finally, it is reasonable to assume that Daesh is composed of multiple subnetworks, whereby natural fissures likely exist between those subnetworks. In identifying these fissures and, more importantly, the influential individuals within them, the United States can set conditions within the caliphate through alternative warfare techniques rather than traditional warfare methods to bring about Daesh's demise. Much like the Sunni Awakening of 2007, disenfranchised groups can play an influential role in shaping the environment if properly leveraged,[19] thus aiding in Daesh's defeat.

E.   RESEARCH QUESTION

Whether Daesh represents an existential threat to the United States or not, a functioning Daesh continues to upset a region that plays a dominate role in geopolitics; the threat must be addressed. In light of the current fiscal environment and in the wake of two protracted wars that have weakened America's appetite for yet another, alternative means to combat Daesh must be considered. This leads to the question: what alternative methods, those currently being employted, are available to the United States to degrade and ultimately destroy Daesh?

F.   METHODOLOGY

The Daesh problem-set remains a fluid topic where daily events impact data collection, requiring constant reevaluation of the methodology. To mitigate this, the research and data collected is bounded from roughly 2001, the inception of mainstream Al Qaeda, to March 2015. To explore alternative means in combating Daesh, the Daesh problem set is analyzed through an IW and social network analysis (SNA) framework and a social movement theory (SMT) lens. This thesis is inductive in nature and its major goals are:

- Identify Daesh membership through social media exploitation, open source databases, mainstream media feeds, and intellectual think tanks.

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19 Andrew Phillips, "How Al Qaeda Lost Iraq," *Australian Journal of International Affairs* 63, no. 1 (March 2009): 64–84.

- Map out Daesh's structural network and use SNA to analyze the network in order to find key the influencers and relationships driving Daesh operations.

- Apply principles of SMT to the network in an effort to develop alternative means to combat Daesh.

G.   ORGANIZATION OF THE THESIS

Chapter I provides an introduction to the Daesh problem set, outlines the genesis of Daesh, the analytical framework, thesis assumptions, and the methodology. Chapter II reviews the literature of social network analysis and social movement theory. It discusses the significance of leadership, brokerage, and network composition and concludes with outlining IW. Chapter III details the significance of human domain mapping and how it supports the U.S. Army's new Army Operating Concept, ARSOF 2022, and a social movement theory approach to unconventional warfare – the foundation of this thesis' recommended strategy. Chapter IV discusses the collected data, analytics, and critical components of Daesh's network. Chapter V offers conceptual strategies, using principles of social movement theory, to combat Daesh.

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II.   LITERATURE REVIEW OF NETWORK DEVELOPMENT

Social network analysis (SNA) and social movement theory (SMT) make up the principle academic arenas utilized in this research. SNA provides the analytic framework to obtain a better understanding of the Daesh network while principles of SMT are utilized to develop concepts of network strategy and alternative options to combat Daesh. The literature review begins with a discussion of mobilizing structures and networks, the overarching framework used to analyze Daesh. Within this overall framework, the literature review covers leadership, brokerage and connective tissues, and operational cells. Figure 1 represents a graphical model of the analytical framework utilized throughout this research.
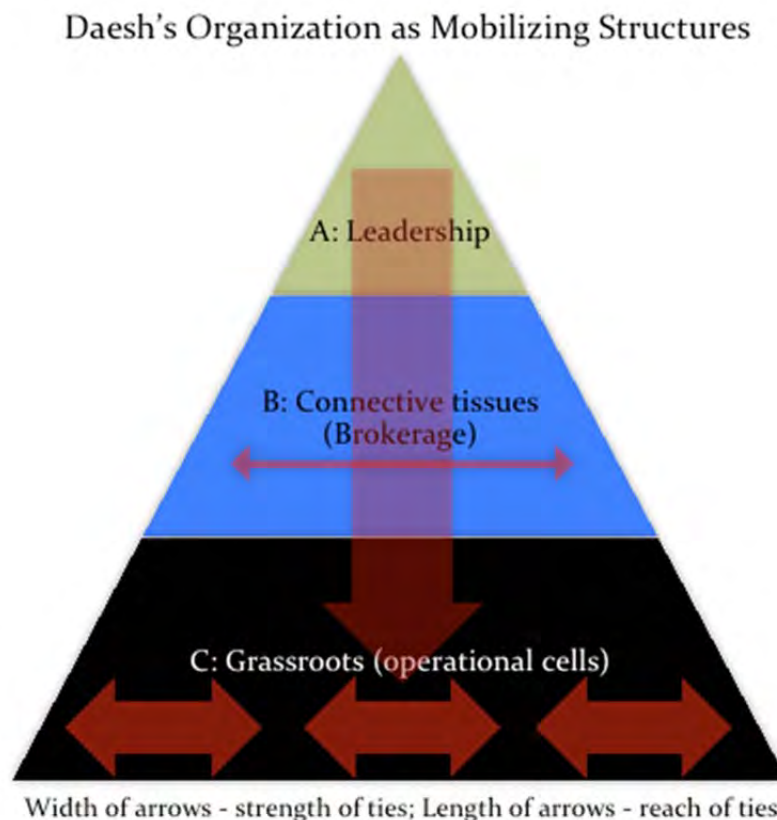

Figure 1.   Daesh's Mobilizing Structures

A.   MOBILIZING STRUCTURES AND NETWORKS

The arguments as to why organization occurs and the most effective form of organization are vast. Sidney Tarrow argues that semi-independent local groups that are tied together through connective structures generate the most effective forms of organization.[20] Tarrow's analysis combines the three different aspects of movement organization—formal hierarchical organization, ad hoc organization, and organization through connective structures. This section briefly discusses each aspect, providing a better understanding of Daesh's operational cells and its supporting ties.

The three aspects of organization Tarrow outlines refer to how a movement develops. First is the formal hierarchical organization. As cited by Tarrow, Zald and McCarthy describe this as an organization with a predefined set of goals and then organizes its movement to accomplish these goals.[21] This is akin to an entrepreneur attempting to secure its own niche within an established industry, developing a business plan with associated goals, and creating its business around that plan. The structure is formal, with little room for flexibility, and its success depends on the business plan's strength and the chosen leadership to implement the plan.

Both Gould and McAdam, as cited by Tarrow, explain that the second organizational form is a result of happenstance, where collective action occurs after the movement makes contact with opponents, causing the movement to manifest out of necessity.[22] A contemporary example of this organizational form is that of the African American community in Ferguson, MO, following the shooting death of Michael Brown. Prior to Brown's death, there was no formal organization to initiate collective action with the intent of social change. The tragic death of one of its community members served as the catalyst that spurred collective action.

The final organizational form Tarrow describes is that of connective structures. Citing Dani, Tarrow explains that it is only when a movement internalizes its significant

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20 Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements, Collective Action and Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 124.

21 Ibid., 123.

22 Ibid., 123–124.

ties, linking together every aspect of the movement—leader to follower, center to periphery, and various supporting social groups—that a movement coalesces into a unified organization.[23] The movement's leadership can mobilize the base during times of need, then allow the movement to fall into abeyance structures—or temporarily inactive structures—following the required collective action.[24] This combination of semi-formal hierarchy with decentralized support offers a more flexible organizational form with a unifying leadership capable of ensuring the movement's longevity.

Tarrow concludes that there is no single model for successful organization. Formal hierarchical movement organizations offer a permanent leadership structure capable of internalizing its base, but offer little flexibility in its ability to disrupt. Conversely, decentralized autonomy may succeed in the heat of the moment, but lacks the necessary leadership and infrastructure required to sustain a movement. Therefore, movement organizers must find a reasonable balance between the two. Central to each, however, are the informal ties that link a movement's formal and informal components. This connective structure gives a movement the strength needed for sustainment while simultaneously providing a form of hierarchy that leadership needs to control the movement.[25] To disrupt Daesh, it is important to identify its connective structures to better understand how it is organized, how it operates, and most importantly its critical ties.

1.   Ties

Successful collective action requires support from across a society, which is generated from both horizontal and vertical ties. A tie is defined as "a relation between two actors. A tie can be either directed or undirected."[26] Horizontal ties establish a movement's base at a society's grassroots level. As that base expands, it can generate momentum to propel the movement forward. In this thesis, horizontal ties are defined as

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23 Ibid., 124.

24 Ibid., 129.

25 Ibid., 137.

26 Sean F. Everton, *Disrupting Dark Networks*, No. 34 (New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012), 403.

those ties between groups or individuals within the same social class of a society. Middle class groups, which include, but are not limited to, blue collar workers, teachers, and civil servants, are considered to be within the same social class, while upper class groups, such as political elites, business executives, and senior religious leaders, are considered to be in a different, higher social class. Alternatively, vertical ties can provide a movement its legitimacy by linking the movement's base of lower and middle classes to respected elites within the higher classes, thus elevating the movement's stature. Completing this conceptual framework strengthens the overall network, makes it more resistant to opposition, and increases the probability of successful collective action.

Ties can be further categorized as weak and strong. Tie strength is considered to be scalable but can be difficult to define. With respect to individuals, strong ties can be seen as "those [ties] where actors have repeated and relatively intense interactions with one another."[27] Conversely, weak ties are "those [ties] where actors see one another occasionally or rarely."[28] To further complicate this topic, the strength of a tie can vary with time. This is best demonstrated in a contemporary U.S. military profession. Two individuals may work together on daily basis within the same unit for years, developing a strong tie. Upon the tour's conclusion, the two are likely to conduct a permanent change of station and move on to different assignments at different duty stations. This may cause the strong tie to diminish into a weak tie should they maintain sporadic contact or, should they never contact each other again, sever the tie altogether.

Granovetter's study of weak ties highlights their importance in linking different groups to one another within an institutional or organizational setting.[29] He argues that while not all weak ties are bridges, all bridges are in fact weak ties. It is these bridges that link previously unlinked groups and help expand networks. Thus, increasing the number of bridges within a network can provide the aforementioned momentum needed to propel the movement forward. This is not to suggest that strong ties are of no use. Krackhardt,

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27 Everton, *Disrupting Dark Networks*, 8.

28 Ibid., 8.

29 Mark S. Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties," *American Journal of Sociology* (1973): 1360–1380.

for instance, argues that trust is built through strong ties and provides a sense of security during unsecure times, thus making an organization or institution more resilient.[30] This trust factor relating to strong ties can support the legitimacy required of a movement to succeed. Building on these perspectives, Burt argues that although most bridges are weak ties, strong ties can also serve as bridges. He contends that if a tie, regardless of strength, spans a space between two groups (i.e., a structural hole), it is a bridge.[31] This bridging construct can help explain how Daesh was able to withstand the combined U.S./Sunni onslaught in 2007, persevere, and rebuild into an organization whose reemergence overpowered Iraqi and Syrian forces in 2014.

The importance of both strong and weak ties is apparent in the structural analysis of Daesh. In its attempt to unite Muslims under the caliphate, Daesh understands, likely through intuition rather than formal social network analysis, that its strong ties within its core are critical in maintaining a cohesive organization while both weak and strong ties help grow the organization through brokerage. Pressures from the United States and the international coalition intend to stress Daesh beyond its coping capacity, leading to a breakdown of its structural ties and its ultimate destruction. Whether intentional or coincidental, Daesh's ties are allowing it to persevere through this unsecure time.

Daesh's horizontal and vertical ties, both strong and weak, make up the connective structure that provides Daesh with the formal hierarchy needed to sustain its movement while offering enough flexibility to adjust its operations at the grassroots level. With a better understanding of ties and their relevance in network dynamics, the analysis now takes a top-down approach, beginning with leadership.

B.   LEADERSHIP: VERTICAL STRONG TIES

To identify individuals capable of leading a movement against Daesh, one must first qualify Daesh's leadership to better understand how the organization is run. This section begins by outlining Max Weber's framework of legitimate authority followed by

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30 David Krackhardt, "The Strength of Strong Ties: The Importance of Philos in Organizations," in *Networks and Organizations: Structure, Form, and Action*, ed. Nitin Nohria and Robert G. Eccles (Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 1992), 216–239.

31 Everton, *Disrupting Dark Networks*, 245.

how Daesh's authority falls within that framework. Next, it discusses leadership capital followed by a brief discussion on al-Baghdadi's own leadership capital. The section concludes with a discussion on clientelism and how it relates to Daesh leadership.

1. Weber's Framework

Discussing the conceptual framework of authority will allow a better understanding of how Daesh derives its authority, thus helping to identify the qualities needed in leadership that can potentially undermine Daesh. Max Weber identified and elaborates on the three pure types of legitimate authority that exist within an organization or society: rational, traditional, and charismatic.[32] Rational, or legal, authority is founded on the concept of codified rules and regulations, as prescribed by an accepted group of leaders, imposed on a set of people who in turn willingly adhere to the rules.[33] The world has been witness to the formality from the Romans to the democratic governments of today. An authority is deemed traditional when the obedience of a people is not to a codified set of rules, but rather to a leader whose authorities have been handed down from the past in a sacrosanct manner because "that's the way it's always been."[34] Examples of this are gerontocracy, where the authority rests with a group of elders, as with Native American tribes; patriarchalism, where authority rests with a particular man through inheritance, as in a household; and patrimonialism, where a leader uses purely personal administrative staff to achieve absolute authority over a ruled people, such as sultans of Egyptian past.[35] Finally, according to Weber, charismatic authority is often seen as the antithesis of both rational and traditional authority, which are both perceived as common. Charismatic authority is viewed as beyond the routine of everyday authority. Charismatic authority is recognized as a leader whose virtue separates him from the mundane, is revered as one with other worldly powers or qualities, and therefore requires

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32 Max Weber, *The Theory of Social and Economic Organization* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2009), 325–328.

33 Ibid., 329–330.

34 Ibid., 341.

35 Ibid., 346–347.

undying devotion and obedience.[36] Contemporary examples of charismatic authority are the Branch Davidian's David Koresh and Jim Jones of the People's Temple. An authority may implement a combination of Weber's construct to legitimize its own authority, as is the case with Daesh.

2. Daesh Authority within Weber's Framework

Whether intentional or coincidental, Daesh implements aspects from all three of Weber's forms of authority in its attempt to legitimize its authority over the Muslim world, or *Ummah*. To justify its rational authority, Daesh implements the codified Sharia law directly from the Quran and fatwas, or Islamic legal decree,[37] from Islam's two most venerated hadiths,[38] written records of the Prophet Muhammad's sayings, and a primary source for religious law and moral guidance.[39] The *Ummah*, therefore, is obligated to adhere to its rules and regulations with Daesh as the enforcing authority. Legitimizing its traditional authority, Daesh compares al-Baghdadi's current struggle to that of the *Millat*, or path, of Ibrahim,[40] Allah's choice to introduce monotheism, more specifically, Islam, to mankind.[41] This concept is outlined in detail in Daesh's first monthly propaganda periodical, *Dabiq*, whereby Allah chooses Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi to bring the true version of Islam back to the world, much like Ibrahim of Islamic lore, with the Islamic State as his vehicle.[42] The justification for Daesh's charismatic authority rests solely with al-Baghdadi. While he may not be touted as one with other worldly powers, al-Baghdadi is

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36 Ibid., 358–362.

37 Muhammad Hisham Kabbani, "What Is a Fatwa?" *The Islamic Supreme Council of America*, accessed on January 29, 2015. http://www.islamicsupremecouncil.org/understanding-islam/legal-rulings/44-what-is-a-fatwa.html.

38 Harleen K. Gambhir, "Dabiq: The Strategic Messaging of the Islamic State," *Institute for the Study of War*, August 15, 2014, 6. https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/dabiq-strategic-messaging-islamic-state.

39 "Hadith | Islam," *Encyclopedia Britannic*,. accessed on January 29, 2015. http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/251132/Hadith.

40 *Dabiq*, Issue 1. The Islamic State. July 5, 2104. https://ia902500.us.archive.org/24/items/dbq01_desktop_en/dbq01_desktop_en.pdf .

41 A. Muhammad, "True Islam - Millat Ibrahim," True Islam - Millat Ibrahim, accessed on January 28, 2015. http://www.quran-islam.org/main_topics/islam/pillars/al-salat/salat_related_topics/millat_ibrahim_(P1343).html.

42 *Dabiq*, Issue 1, 20–29.

an alleged member of the al-Bu Badri tribe from Iraq's Diyala province, a tribe historically known for being descendants of the Prophet Muhammad,[43] thus providing him qualities beyond that of the common man. This tribal lineage is a critical requirement for anyone declaring himself caliph, leader of all Muslims. Equating al-Baghdadi to the Prophet Mohammad, the most revered figure in Islam second only to Allah, immediately elevates al-Baghdadi's status to that of prophet, an unattainable attribute for the common man. Following this logic, then, al-Baghdadi supporters have granted him their undying devotion and obedience. Shrouding its argument for legitimate authority in Weber's framework strengthens Daesh's claims to ruling the *Ummah* with al-Baghdadi as its caliph.

Understanding how Daesh has woven its perceived legitimate authority around Weber's framework highlights the difficult task of identifying individuals who may lead a countermovement against Daesh. Such individuals must not only possess the same qualities that rival Daesh's rational, traditional, and charismatic forms of authority, but they must also overpower these forms of authority such that oppositional support is willing to risk everything to actively resist Daesh. To do so, these individuals must possess leadership capital rooted in Weber's forms of legitimate authority.

3. Leadership Capital

Nepstad and Bob hypothesize that leaders possessing the three components of leadership capital, those of cultural, social, and symbolic capital, have a higher likelihood of mobilizing pre-existing organizations when the time is right.[44] Cultural capital allows leaders to better connect with a movement's base through their grassroots understanding of local customs, values, language, and overall way of life.[45] This provides leaders with a sense of homegrown credibility that cannot be manufactured by external forces. Social capital refers to the amount and strength of ties a leader has throughout society, where

43 Aaron Y. Zelin, "Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi: Islamic State's Driving Force," *BBC News*, July 30, 2014, accessed on January 29, 2015. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-28560449.

44 Sharon Erickson Nepstad and Clifford Bob, "When Do Leaders Matter? Hypotheses on Leadership Dynamics in Social Movements," *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 11, no. 1 (2006): 5.

45 Ibid., 4.

"weak ties" refer to broader relationships spanning a society and "strong ties" refer to reoccurring personal contacts, strong social relations, and mutually shared social locations.[46] These ties provide the necessary influences required of a leader to chair a movement. Finally, symbolic capital refers to the "prestige, honor, and social recognition" of individuals, thus epitomizing the movement.[47] Historical figures that best exemplify symbolic capital, and in fact leadership capital, are Nelson Mandela, George Washington, and Ghandi. Al-Baghdadi's own leadership capital is fabricated, at best, in order to build his own credibility and, ostensibly, Daesh's.

4.   Daesh's Leadership Capital

Daesh's propaganda wing has spent an extensive amount of time and effort to build al-Baghdadi's leadership capital and, as a corollary, the legitimacy of Daesh. To start, an unidentified author released the "official biography" of al-Baghdadi on *jihadi* websites in August 2014,[48] likely in support of al-Baghdadi's caliphate announcement the month prior. This editorial delves into every aspect of al-Baghdadi's life, attempting to build his social, cultural, and symbolic capital. It seeks to validate his piousness, his academic prowess in Islamic jurisprudence, his bravery on the *jihadi* battlefield, his devotion to family, and most importantly, justify him as the successor to the Islamic State of Iraq, a previous name of Daesh. Daesh followers believe, then, if al-Baghdadi is in fact the legitimate caliph, his organization is therefore legitimate. While this post hoc fallacy may resonate among the disenfranchised youth targeted for *jihad*, it also offers an exploitable opening in Daesh narrative, which will be discussed in detail in Chapter V.

5.   Clientelism

Auyero, Lapenga, and Poma discuss the importance of vertical tie concepts, through clientelism, or patronage politics. Clientelism is a quid pro quo construct in

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46 Ibid., 4.

47 Ibid., 4.

48 SITE Staff, "A Biography of Abu Bakr Al-Baghdadi," August 12, 2014, accessed on January 29, 2015. http://news.siteintelgroup.com/blog/index.php/entry/226-the-story-behind-abu-bakr-al-baghdadi.

which key authoritative figures promise resources to those that pledge political support.[49] Auyero et al. outline four scenarios where clientelism may spur collective action.[50] The first is supporting a threatened key actor, where the key actor turns to constituents for backing or assistance should adversaries threaten the actor or actor's position. The second involves turning on a key actor, where the key actor does not uphold his or her end of a clientelist bargain and constituents no longer support the key actor. The third scenario involves key actor overt instigation, where the loss of support evolves into actively resisting the key actor. The final scenario involves key actor covert/clandestine instigation, where constituents' active resistance against a key actor becomes subversion or sabotage unbeknownst to the key actor. However, it may occur, successful collective action is dependent on key actors, typically those within the political elite, to play a significant role in the movement.

6.   Clientelism within Daesh

This concept can be applied to Daesh and examined in two ways. First, Daesh implements, almost forces, clientelism to generate support for its movement and the caliphate's expansion. While some are truly enamored with Daesh ideals, there are examples that might suggest otherwise where individuals' support appears to be coerced.[51] Second, this forced coercion will likely prove to be Daesh's demise; its citizens will eventually expect a return on investment. Daesh's capacity to provide basic societal needs, such as clean water, electricity, and waste disposal to name a few, is likely to wane as the United States continues to degrade Daesh. In this case, the United States can destroy the "balance of reciprocity,"[52] resulting in collective action. As a precursor, the United States can introduce the idea of collective action through social media outlets by conducting a persistent information operations campaign targeting Daesh citizens.

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49 Javier Auyero, Pablo Lapegna, and Fernanda Page Poma, "Patronage politics and contentious collective action: a recursive relationship," *Latin American Politics and Society* 51, no. 3 (2009): 3.

50 Ibid.

51 *VICE News*, "Enforcing Sharia in Raqqa: The Islamic State (Part 3)," August 11, 2014, accessed November 22, 2014. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jOaBNbdUbcA&index=3&list=PLw613M86o5o7ELT6LKyJFKawB6 gUsZSf7.

52 Ibid.

Sowing the seeds of civil unrest by highlighting its failed clientelist atmosphere can foster an insurgency in an attempt undermine Daesh.[53] Chapter V discusses this in detail.

C.   BROKERAGE AND CONNECTIVE TISSUES: HORIZONTAL WEAK TIES

Brokerage is an instrumental concept in understanding the formation of an insurgency consisting of bridges and brokers. A bridge is a tie that connects different groups within a social network. A broker is an individual that sits on either side of that bridge. Brokerage, therefore, is facilitating the transfer of goods, resources, or information between the two groups.[54] SMT literature suggests three critical components of brokerage that are required for its success: the right actor to serve as a broker, the right medium to support brokerage, and continuous analysis of the network's structure. This concept can be viewed from the perspective of a burgeoning network struggling to survive or an adversary attempting to dismantle an already established network. Whatever perspective one takes, the principles of brokerage are the same; it all depends on which side the broker supports. Taking it one step further, it is not the presence of brokers that solidify a network, but the effectiveness of said brokers. Without the right people in place—those who exhibit the right traits, personalities, and characteristics— connected to the right components of a society, networks are doomed to remain stagnant at best or, at worst, completely fall apart. Therefore, conditions must be set in order to promote a broker's success.

The first component of brokerage is finding the "right guy." Gould discusses the importance of unbiased, network-focused, non-resourced based brokerage in the successful development of a network.[55] Brokers who derive their influence from resource incentives are automatically biased and, therefore, untrustworthy. An example of a very successful broker is Paul Revere during the American Revolution. Han demonstrates how

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53 Faysal Itani, "To Defeat ISIS, We Must Treat It Like a State," *Time*, August 14, 2014, accessed on November 24, 2014, http://time.com/3111276/isis-terror-iraq-treat-it-like-a-state/.

54 Everton, *Disrupting Dark Networks*, 13.

55 Roger V. Gould, "Power and social structure in community elites," *Social Forces* 68, no. 2 (1989): 531–552.

Paul Revere was able to seamlessly interact with the different social groups throughout Boston's society.[56] His charismatic qualities afforded him likeability, and his personal traits and education gave him the power of connection. His bridging and brokering potential was reached when the call was made for the Revolution. Therefore, influencers within a society must be those that can transcend social boundaries with characteristics that allow them to connect with leaders within different groups. Whether it is for rallying purposes or information dissemination, finding individuals who can bridge the gap between different social groups is an important factor in influencing operations.

The second component to successful brokerage is the correct medium in which a broker operates. In a more contemporary example of brokerage, Harris discusses Iran's Green Movement of 2009 where its leaders attempted to use a less restricted internet to organize and coordinate the movement's operations. The internet allowed brokers to reach more supporters but failed to fully unite the movement as a whole. Face-to-face communication proved to be the most effective organizing tool, while an increased reliance on electronic communication actually caused organization to wane.[57] Whether these outcomes are a result of an inexperienced society with internet communications or a lack of faith in its reliability, it does demonstrate the importance of the choosing the correct medium for brokerage.

The final component is the continuous analysis of the network in which the broker operates. In Clarke's 2011 article covering brokerage in Egypt's Arab Spring, he warns of relying too heavily on a network's structure to determine brokerage potential.[58] He found that prior to the movement, actors within the network appeared more or less central to Egyptian society, yet they evolved into more or less central actors within the movement. In other words, the situation on the ground drastically changed such that actors with previously no ties later formed ties that proved critical to the movement and

56 Shin-Kap Han, "The other ride of Paul Revere: The brokerage role in the making of the American revolution," *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 14, no. 2 (2009): 143–162.

57 Kevan Harris, "The Brokered Exuberance of the Middle Class: An Ethnographic Analysis of Iran's 2009 Green Movement," *Mobilization: An International Quarterly* 17, no. 4 (2012): 435–455.

58 Killian Clarke, "Unexpected Brokers of Mobilization: Contingency and Networks in the 2011 Egyptian Uprising," *Comparative Politics* 46, no. 4 (2014): 379–397.

vice versa. The movement was forced to adjust its brokerage roles to encompass the newly acquired ties and distance itself from former supporters who turned on the movement. Egypt's Arab Spring demonstrates the necessity for continuous structural analysis, forcing network developers to constantly adjust brokerage roles to extract the most utility from a supportive society.

Understanding the three components of brokerage is critical when developing strategies aimed at dismantling a network. It allows a strategist to identify key links, or connective tissues, that form a network's structural foundation. Much like demolishing a building, attacking the critical links within a network's foundational structure is the most efficient means in which to bring it down. By understanding who makes up the critical links (brokers), in what modus they operate (medium), and continuous analysis of the constantly evolving network, strategist are then able to focus their dismantling efforts on those nodes responsible for holding the network together. The resulting strategy, in effect, will cause the network to implode on itself.

D. OPERATIONAL CELLS: HORIZONTAL STRONG TIES

Daesh set conditions for its return to Iraq by eliminating oppositional horizontal ties throughout the country. As early as 2009, Daesh systematically targeted Government of Iraq (GOI) employees responsible for local governance.[59] In doing so, it successfully eliminated future resistance and ensured its supporters, or at least those who would not actively oppose Daesh, filled those newly vacated positions. In a sense, the elimination of oppositional horizontal ties supported Daesh's near unchallenged return to Iraq.

In the same vein, in a post-caliphate declaration Daesh targeted Sunni Awakening tribes who sided with American forces in 2007, most notably western Anbar's Al Bu Nimr tribe.[60] Daesh's massacre of the Al Bu Nimr tribe sent a message throughout the Sunni world that any anti-Daesh people, be it Sunni or Shia, were considered enemies

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59 Craig Whiteside, "War, Interrupted, Part I: The Roots of the Jihadist Resurgence in Iraq," *War on the Rocks*, November 5, 2014, accessed on March 17, 2015. http://warontherocks.com/2014/11/war-interrupted-part-i-the-roots-of-the-jihadist-resurgence-in-iraq/.

60 Orla Guerin, "Iraq: Sunni Tribe 'Left for Slaughter' by Islamic State," *BBC News*, November 10, 2014, accessed on March 17, 2015. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29984668.

and therefore destined for death. This process eliminated the opposition's horizontal strong ties while simultaneous building its own supportive horizontal strong ties throughout the Sunni community. Whether Sunni tribes had foreknowledge of Daesh's attack on the Al Bu Nimr tribe or not, months prior to the massacre, leaders from 23 Iraqi and Syrian Sunni tribes traveled to Amman, Jordan to announce their *bayat*, or allegiance, to Daesh. In all likelihood, these tribes were hedging their bets by siding with whom they presumed to be the eventual winning side and not necessarily full subscribers to Daesh's ideology.[61] Regardless of intentions, their pledges of *bayat* provided Daesh with critical connective tissues, a plethora of horizontal strong ties, it needed to succeed in its territorial takeover.

Internally, the vast majority of Daesh's senior leadership and al-Baghdadi's closest confidants are Iraqi nationals.[62] This in and of itself represents horizontal strong ties within Daesh. Much like foreign nationals immigrating to another country, the majority inevitably resides within the same community to aid in assimilation and ease the burden of learning to live amongst an entirely new culture. Following the psychological principle of similarity, likeminded people tend to gravitate towards each other, providing a sense of security and trust throughout the community. Examples of this phenomenon are Arabs in Dearborn, MI, and Chinese in San Francisco's Chinatown. Daesh, specifically al-Baghdadi, used his time in Camp Bucca to recruit likeminded, trusted Iraqis into his inner fold,[63] placing some in senior caliphate positions and others at *wilaya*, or provincial, positions. Al-Baghdadi established horizontal strong ties in Camp Bucca to create an Iraqi community founded on a common ideology, Salafism, and a common way of life, *jihad*. This built Daesh's core and resonated outwards towards the operational cells at the periphery.

The final example of Daesh's horizontal strong ties is found within operational cells at the periphery, specifically among the ranks of foreign fighters. Daesh's takeover

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61 Bill Powell, "Sunni Tribes Will Bet on the Strong Horse, and That's ISIS," *Newsweek*, December 11, 2014, accessed on March 16, 2015. http://www.newsweek.com/2014/12/19/sunni-tribes-will-bet-strong-horse-and-thats-isis-290633.html.

62 Chulov, "ISIS: This Inside Story."

63 Ibid.

caused a mass exodus of both Syrian and Iraqi nationals seeking refuge from Daesh's violent regime. This lack of a labor supply is just one reason Daesh employed foreign fighters in operational cells tasked with controlling the caliphate. The most visible example is that of the *Hisbah*, the morality policy charged with enforcing the Sharia. Syrians that have successfully fled the caliphate report that the *Hisbah*, and foreign fighters in general, are more determined fighters, earn better salaries, are harder to corrupt, generally have more military experience and technical expertise, and are the most feared.[64] This combination contributes to foreign fighters as a whole experiencing an elevated status. By default, they then share a more prestigious status form horizontal strong ties within their own community. Therefore, the previously mentioned concept of foreigners sticking together in foreign lands holds true in the caliphate as well.

E.   CONCLUSION

Social network analysis (SNA) and social movement theory (SMT) literature provided a foundation for obtaining a better understanding of the Daesh network. The literature review discussed Daesh's mobilizing structures and network and provided a detailed examination of leadership, brokerage and connective tissues, and operational cells. This framework will be used in Chapter IV to discuss the Daesh network and provided critical analysis to support an alternative method to combat Daesh. Chapter III explores the realm of human domain mapping and discusses how it not only supports, but also enhances the United States' ability to conduct combat operations in 21st century warfare and ultimately the fight against Daesh.

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64 Yaroslav Trofimov, "In Islamic State Stronghold of Raqqa, Foreign Fighters Dominate," *Wall Street Journal*, February 5, 2015, sec. World, accessed on March 15, 2015. http://www.wsj.com/articles/in-islamic-state-stronghold-of-raqqa-foreign-fighters-dominate-1423087426.

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III.   MAPPING THE HUMAN DOMAIN

Physical terrain maps are vital to the U.S. military in planning, coordinating, navigating, and executing operations. These "graphic representation[s] of a portion of the earth's surface drawn to scale, as seen from above,"[65] provide a common operating picture for the most senior commander down to the lowest ranking soldier. Combat in the 21st century, however, involves not only geographical terrain but also the human domain to a larger, and arguably more important, extent. Therefore, human domain maps are just as critical to 21st century warfare as terrestrial maps. This chapter demonstrates the importance of these human domain maps. It first discusses the new Army Operating Concept (AOC) followed by a discussion on the future of Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) as outlined in *ARSOF 2022*. Next, it outlines how human domain mapping supports the new AOC and *ARSOF 2022* in relation to developing foreign policy strategies. The chapter concludes by discussing a social movement theory (SMT) approach to unconventional warfare (UW), the basis for this thesis' recommended strategy, in which understanding the human domain is absolutely imperative.

A.   THE NEW ARMY OPERATING CONCEPT

The Department of Defense (DOD) recently charged the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) with overhauling the AOC to reflect 21st century warfare. TRADOC's transition from "Air Land Battle," the current AOC, to "Winning in a Complex World," is more than just a doctrinal change; it is a mindset change that begins with pre-war, or in contemporary joint parlance, Phase 0 activities. This section discusses these activities and how the AOC intends to accomplish this task. First, the section discusses the four continuities of war, followed by the AOC improving on the current operational preparation of the environment (OPE) to intellectual and operational preparation of the environment (IOPE). The section concludes by examining how special

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65 Department of the Army, 2001, *Map Reading and Land Navigation* (FM 3–25.26), Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 2-1.

operations forces can accomplish IOPE and how human domain mapping can facilitate its mission.

The new AOC is predicated on four continuities of war: war is an extension of politics, a contest of wills between adversaries, a human endeavor, and uncertain.[66] These Clausewitzian continuities highlight the need to master an operational environment's (OE) human dynamics pre-hostilities, so they can then be shaped and manipulated during the conflict in order to set conditions that best support U.S. strategic objectives post hostilities. To fight a 21st century war in an environment that is dynamic and uncertain,[67] the side that can more accurately anticipate the unknowable will have a marked advantage. Much like fighting a terrain-based war in which map reconnaissance can provide crucial information regarding future battles, war fought within the human and political domain requires its own "map" reconnaissance. Unfortunately, human domain maps are not nearly as prevalent in intelligence shops as physical terrain maps. Like cartographers of old, modern day human domain cartographers are needed to develop human domain maps for 21st century warfare. Human domain maps will provide the initial understanding of human dynamics and help maintain that understanding throughout the conflict and beyond.

The new AOC relies on IOPE, the process to preset a theater of operations and provide future operational forces maximum understanding of the OE prior to committing forces.[68] To accomplish this, the AOC can rely on regionally aligned special operations forces (SOF) to ensure maximum situational understanding across land, air, sea, space, and cyber domains by fusing and disseminating information within the combined and joint arena. Humans are the focal point of this fusion construct, requiring an intimate understanding of the people driving the operating environment.

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66 Department of the Army, 2014, *The U.S. Army Operating Concept* (TRADOC Pamphlet 525–3-1), Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

67 Ibid., iii.

68 Ibid., iv.

B.   THE FUTURE OF ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS FORCES

In early 2013, the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) commander Lieutenant General (LTG) Charles T. Cleveland released his vision for the future of Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) in *ARSOF 2022*. It highlights the ambiguity of 21st century warfare and lays out the blueprint to "enable ARSOF to thrive in a future operating environment that is characterized by uncertainty."[69] Nesting his vision with the new AOC, LTG Cleveland laid the groundwork to combat this uncertainty through two critical capabilities—surgical strike and special warfare. This section will outline those two critical capabilities, briefly discuss their integral components, and demonstrate how they fit into the new AOC.

ARSOF 2022 divides the future of ARSOF into two critical capabilities, surgical strike and special warfare. They are defined as:

- **Surgical Strike:**   The execution of activities in a precise manner that employ SOF in hostile, denied or politically sensitive environments to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover or damage designated targets, or influence threats.

- **Special Warfare:** The execution of activities that involve a combination of lethal and non-lethal actions taken by specially trained and educated forces that have a deep understanding of cultures and foreign language, proficiency in small-unit tactics, subversion, sabotage and the ability to build and fight alongside indigenous combat formations in a permissive, uncertain or hostile environment. [70]

By their definitions alone, it is clear each capability represents a very different approach in prosecuting uncertainty; surgical strike takes a direct, kinetic approach while special warfare takes a more indirect approach through partnerships. The intent is to produce mutually supporting SOF elements capable of executing a multitude of operations across the SOF Core Operations spectrum at the operational and tactical levels all focused on common strategic goals.[71]

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69 Department of the Army, 2013, *ARSOF 2022*, United States Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, NC, 3.

70 Ibid., 10.

71 Ibid., 10–11.

Within the spectrum of surgical strike and special warfare, UW is a special warfare operation, while combating weapons of mass destruction (WMD) falls under the purview of surgical strike (see Figure 2). The remaining SOF Core Operations—Foreign Internal Defense, Stability Operations, Counterinsurgency, Support to Major Combat Operations (MCO), and Counterterrorism—are accomplished through a combination of both critical capabilities, with some relying more heavily on surgical strike capabilities and others more so on special warfare capabilities. This demonstrates the mutual dependency of both critical capabilities while highlighting the specific tasks designated to each.
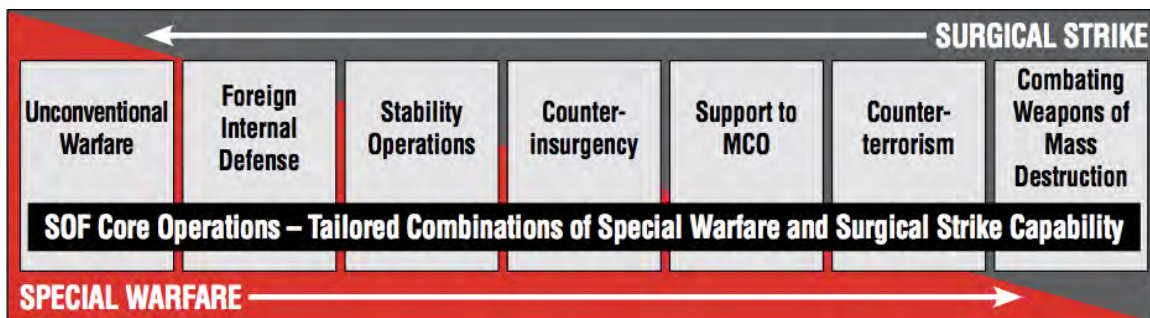
Figure 2.   From *ARSOF 2022*, SOF Core Operations within the spectrum of Special Warfare and Surgical Strike[72]

USASOC further identifies ARSOF as the force to fight within the AOC's newly coined human domain. As a component of the Army, USASOC is inherently postured to conduct operations throughout the land domain. The new AOC has identified, however, that the human domain is where future of warfare will be decided. Therefore, the Army must have a component capable of operating and succeeding within the human domain. USASOC has taken the lead in developing a force capable of operating in this new domain (see Figure 3), and LTG Cleveland set his priorities to support such an endeavor.[73]

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72 Ibid., 11.

73 Ibid., 16.

Figure 3.   USASOC is the leading proponent for operations
within the Human Domain[74]

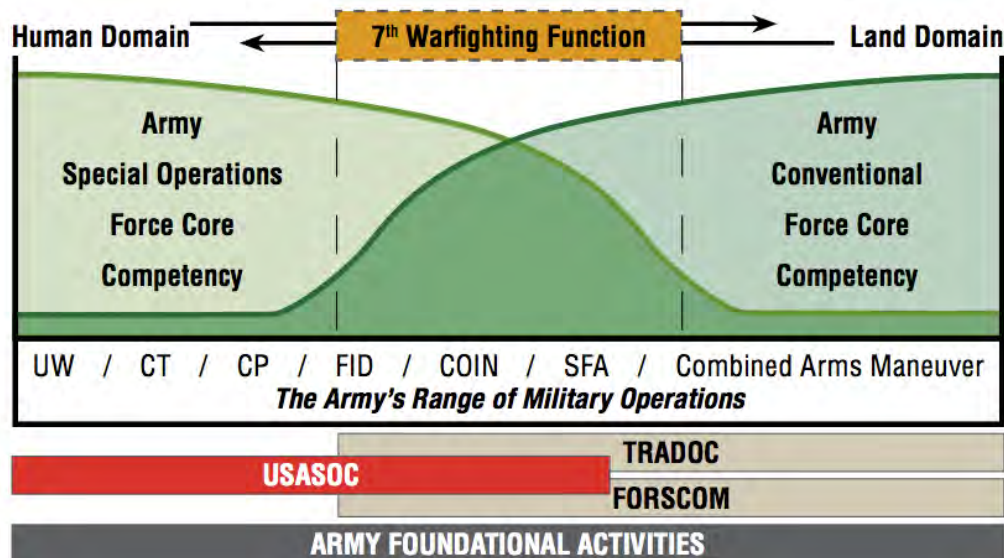LTG Cleveland's top priority in *ARSOF 2022* is investing in human capital, a reflection of 21st century warfare. When warfare transitioned from trench warfare to maneuver warfare, the U.S. Army invested in weaponry and modified tactics in support of the evolution. The concept here is the same. The focus of warfare shifting from the land domain to the human domain requires an upgrade of the U.S. arsenal; LTG Cleveland's top priority represents this upgrade, specifically to special warfare. USASOC intends to improve upon its human capital development by taking advantage of the wide range of ethnicities found in America. The intent is to recruit those who already possess native language capabilities and inherent cultural knowledge, train them in the arts of special warfare, and build a capacity within USASOC to access regions previously thought untenable. This diverse force will have the capability to operate across the broad human domain spectrum, providing special warfare an advantage on a scale far beyond the Army's current capabilities.[75]

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74 Ibid., 16.

75 Ibid., 18–19.

C.   HUMAN DOMAIN MAPPING IN THE NEW ARMY OPERATING CONCEPT

TRADOC's new AOC transformation is a monumental task with bold aspirations. The concept is logical, yet its practical application has yet to be witnessed. The new AOC assumes political and human dynamics ensures 21st century warfare will continue be complex and uncertain.[76] This suggests a shift in intelligence requirements, from terrain analysis and studying the enemy's composition and disposition to analyzing a society's human dynamics. The two natural assumptions that follow are the need to retool our intelligence preparation of the battlefield (IPB) prior to hostilities and the need to develop a force capable of accomplishing this preparation. This begs the question, how is this to be done? The simple answer can be deduced from a rudimentary comparison of an infantry company attacking an enemy encampment in the land domain and a 21st century warfare operation within the human domain using a traditional IPB practice.

To plan a raid on an enemy camp within the land domain, an infantry company's first step is to consult a map using OACOK—observation and fields of fire, avenues of approach, cover and concealment, obstacles, and key terrain—as an analytical framework. Commanders will first identify the enemy's observation and fields of fire within its defenses to help identify which avenues of approach the company should take to advance on the enemy encampment. Along those avenues of approach, they will then assess the level of cover and concealment based on terrain to help determine what formations to use and where to emplace his attacking force and support by fire positions. They will then determine potential obstacles that are likely integrated in the enemy's defense, such as mines or concertina wire, and adjust his plan accordingly. Finally, attacking commanders will locate any key terrain that will provide his unit a marked advantage over the enemy, such as a hilltop overlooking the objective or the only bridge crossing a non-fordable river. Only once this process is complete are the commanders able to formulate a plan to effectively raid the enemy position while minimizing the risk to his unit. This same concept can be applied to conducting operations within the human domain.

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76 Ibid., 8.

To plan an operation within the human domain, operators' first step is to identify the regime's observation and fields of fire to determine the regime's level of situational awareness throughout the society. They will determine which areas the regime controls, such as security forces or governmental agencies, and which areas it does not. This "observation" can also include how to use organic access and placement, especially around boundaries to "see" who is who in the area of interest. This allows operators to determine which individuals and groups to target and which to avoid, or avenues of approach, when attempting to infiltrate the network. Next, they determine the level of cover and concealment within those groups that offer the best avenues into the network. This is as simple as identifying if those groups are politically sensitive for the regime to attack or eliminate because they are equally important to both the regime and the revolutionaries, resistance, and insurgents (RRI).[77] Examples of good cover and concealment are religious groups and civil services. The obstacles operators must identify are those rules, laws, or conditions that reduce their freedom of movement within the targeted society, such as curfews, rewards for reporting dissent to the authorities, or secret police like the Iranian Basij. These are critical parts of the targeted society the operator must avoid. Finally, operators must identify an aspect within the targeted society that provides them a marked advantage over the regime, or key terrain. This can come in the form of individuals who bridge seemingly dissimilar groups, marginalized elites with grudges against the regime, or religious authorities with the ability to sway popular thought. After a thorough analysis of the targeted society based on a well developed and current human domain map, the operators can formulate a more informed plan with which to infiltrate and eventually influence a targeted society. Refer to Table 1 for a brief comparison of land domain IPB and human domain IPB.

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77 David S. Maxwell, "Do We Really Understand Unconventional Warfare?" *Small Wars Journal*, October 23, 2014. accessed on February 2, 2015.
http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&ved=0CC0QFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fsmallwarsjournal.com%2Fprintpdf%2F16397&ei=msvkVPb5JIzxoATEx4Aw&usg=AFQjCNE9sVfNBNvLDFV77z4jK354tmCgMg&bvm=bv.85970519,d.cGU. David Maxwell introduced the term RRI.

Table 1.   Comparison of land and human domain analysis using traditional
IPB technique, OACOK

OACOK	Land Domain IPB	Human Domain IPB	Human Domain Examples
Observation/Fields of Fire	Template defensive positions to determine how the enemy is guarding his position, where he can see/shoot	Parts of society the regime is in control with maximum situational awareness	Factions and fractures within regime security forces, government agencies
Avenues of Approach	Available routes to and from the objective	Internal actors that offer external actors access to the network	Transnational NGOs Transportation entities Cyber and virtual networks Epistemic communities Journalists
Cover and Concealment	Routes/locations offer the maximum protection based on terrain	Groups/organizations the enemy regime cannot freely repress because they are just as important to the regime as they are to revolutionaries, resistance, and insurgents (RRI)	Religious authorities Civil services NGOs with legal status Professional associations
Obstacles	Obstructions the enemy has integrated within his defenses	Rules/laws within a targeted society that reduce US personnel freedom of movement; Civilian networks/groups loyal/friendly to the regime	Curfews Regime population and resource control measures Censorship Pro-regime militia groups
Key Terrain	Locations that afford a marked advantage	Existing nodes that can link multiple, non-related groups within a society; organic leadership networks (tribal/ethnic/minority associations); organic large-scale movement groups	Civil organizations Marginalized elites Religious leaders Student unions Labor unions Opposition movements

This simple comparison using traditional IPB techniques reinforces the importance of maps in the land domain and demonstrates the need for similar maps in the human domain. Planning operations within the human domain, in which the importance of human dynamics outweigh geographical terrain, requires maps that afford operators the same degree, but not the same kind, of detail as if they were planning a traditional infantry operation. Human domain maps can offer this to 21st century warriors so they have the same level of situational awareness within the human domain as traditional fighting units experienced in the land domain.

D. HUMAN DOMAIN MAPPING AND ARSOF 2022

> Unconventional Warfare: Activities to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power through and with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area.
>
> —Joint Pub 1–02[78]

The new AOC acknowledges that 21st century warfare requires the full integration of conventional forces (CF) and special operations forces (SOF) to "conduct operations of significant scale and duration to accomplish the mission across the range of military operations."[79] Unconventional Warfare (UW) is significant to the range of military operations with respect to SOF. Retired U.S. Army Special Forces Colonel David Maxwell points out that U.S. policy makers unfortunately lack an intellectual foundation of UW, preventing them from effectively implementing a UW strategy into national policy.[80] This observation makes the aforementioned CF/SOF integration difficult, as the SOF Truths correctly surmise that most SOF operations, especially UW, require non-SOF support.[81] UW cannot be accomplished overnight but rather through persistent engagement with regional partners focused on assessing, developing, and understanding relationships of influential actors and groups, both friend and foe. This requirement is a leading factor in *ARSOF 2022's* attempt to enhance ARSOF's ability in this arena, specifically in special warfare. This enhanced capability, supported by human domain mapping, can provide a clearer picture of the human dynamics in strategically important regions where UW could be the only viable foreign policy option. To exemplify this concept, a brief discussion of UW operations is most appropriate.

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78 Department of Defense, 2014, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Joint Pub 1–02), Washington DC: Government Printing Office, 263. http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp1_02.pdf.

79 TRADOC PAM 525–3-1, 25.

80 David S. Maxwell, "Do We Really Understand Unconventional Warfare?" *Small Wars Journal*, October 23, 2014, accessed on February 2, 2015. http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&ved=0CC0QFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fsmallwarsjournal.com%2Fprintpdf%2F16397&ei=msvkVPb5JIzxoATEx4Aw&usg=AFQjCNE9sVfNBNvLDFV77z4jK354tmCgMg&bvm=bv.85970519,d.cGU.

81 SOF Truths. http://www.soc.mil/USASOCHQ/SOFTruths.html.

1. UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE AND HUMAN DOMAIN MAPPING

Human domain mapping is arguably most pertinent to UW as shown in Figure 2. FM 3–18, Special Forces Operations, provides the UW operational framework for U.S. Army Special Forces (USSF), the proponent for UW. USSF are capable of and tasked with:

- Infiltrating denied territory and linking up with resistance forces

- Providing training and advisory assistance to the guerrilla or underground forces [as] part of a resistance

- Coordinating and synchronizing the various resistance command elements with U.S. efforts.[82]

This process is conducted through seven tactical phases—preparation, initial contact, infiltration, organization, buildup, employment, and transition. The focus throughout is identifying, assessing, vetting, selecting, training, equipping, managing, and employing partner forces whose interests support U.S. strategic goals of coercing, disrupting, or overthrowing a government or occupying power.[83] An implied task, and critical throughout this process, is an understanding of the human dynamics within the UW operational area (UWOA). This understanding allows USSF to target the appropriate forces, establish rapport with the most influential individuals within the targeted forces, and maintain those relationships to secure a long-term partnership focused on mutual strategic goals. To simplify the difficult task of identifying partner forces with whom to build relationships, planners and intelligence officials can implement human domain mapping to provide UW practitioners a clearer picture of the UWOA.

2. ARSOF IPOE IN SUPPORT OF THE NEW AOC

Returning to the Army's new IOPE concept, ARSOF is postured, with recognized regional relationships and expertise, to develop and operate networks within a well-established joint, interagency, intergovernmental, multinational (JIIM) environment. By

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82 Department of the Army, 2012, *Special Forces Operations* (FM 3–18), Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2–5.

83 Ibid., 2–4—2–8.

virtue of their job requirements, ARSOF is the eyes and ears of future commanders. They are poised with in depth knowledge of the human environment—beyond just knowing names, duty positions, and responsibilities—and can identify who influences whom, recognize which relationships drive the operational environment, and most importantly, discern how the U.S. can influence those relationships to support U.S. strategic objectives. ARSOF's mapping of the human domain can cogently present this data, identify critical inject points within the network, and ultimately provide a more refined IPOE product.

Important to ARSOF, and to the greater intelligence mission, is the continuous assessment of revolutionary, resistance, and insurgent (RRI) potential in politically untenable regions that maintain strategic U.S. interests,[84] implying that an initial RRI understanding in these regions exists. This is unfortunately not always true. Where a lack of initial understanding may exist, such as in denied territories like Iran, Syria, or parts of Iraq, detailed research and analysis of the human domain to develop network maps can help fill the void. Beyond classified intelligence reports and daily situational updates, it is detailed research and analysis of the human domain focused on relational data that will provide policy makers with the knowledge of power players, key influential relations, and RRI driving political and societal affairs within a region.

Building this knowledge base begins with mapping the known human domain. This is often accomplished through readily accessible, open source information that may be scattered throughout the internet on mainstream media, social media, or think tank databases, to name a few locations. Consolidating, coding, and mapping this information is twofold. First, it helps build the knowledge base of a society's inner workings that policy makers require for better understanding of regional dynamics. Second, it provides a level of situational awareness to operators, most notably UW practitioners, which would typically take months of work. As it is often said, knowledge is power. To increase power, one must increase knowledge. Increasing knowledge requires more information,

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84 Maxwell, "Do We Really Understand Unconventional Warfare?"

generated from detailed research and analysis. As it relates to foreign policy, mapping the human domain consolidates a society's relational data, identifies power players and key influencers, and illuminates a society's inner workings. With such knowledge, policy makers will be able to appreciate how alternative foreign policy options, such as UW, can provide more power. This power, then, provides policy makers a greater ability to influence a region and may prove more beneficial than traditional foreign policy measures. Without this understanding, they are quick to resort to those measures that often prolong problems rather than eliminate them. In short, human domain mapping provides a more thorough understanding of regional dynamics, a critical factor in developing foreign policy strategies, thus allowing policy makers to consider alternative strategies from a more informed position.

E. **HUMAN DOMAIN MAPPING IN A SOCIAL MOVEMENT THEORY APPROACH TO UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE**

This final section examines the social movement theory (SMT) approach to UW, which provides a framework for leveraging and coopting existing opposition movements, or RRI, to augment a UW campaign supporting U.S. strategic objectives.[85] Successfully integrating this theory into contemporary UW campaign planning requires a foundational understanding of the political and human dynamics within an operational environment. Mapping the human domain provides this understanding, as previously detailed. More importantly, it helps illuminate those opposition movements with leveraging or coopting potential, such as preexisting dissident groups, marginalized elites, or disenfranchised youth.

Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Glenn Johnson and Doowan Lee note that the benefits of adding a SMT approach to UW are threefold.[86] First, it provides a theoretical framework as to why RRI occurs. While not every RRI evolves on a predetermined

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85 Glenn W. Johnson and Doowan Lee, "Revisiting the Social Movement Approach to Unconventional Warfare," *Small Wars Journal*, December 1, 2014, accessed on February 3, 2015. http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCUQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fsmallwarsjournal.com%2Fprintpdf%2F18227&ei=2c3kVIKjMMenoQSxvYG4Aw&usg=AFQjCNF-YgLEr8UTQykek-BOuYu0Yr8Xug&bvm=bv.85970519,d.cGU.

86 Ibid.

template, there are certain principles that exist in facilitating their successful development. Some of these principles include identifying grievances, developing a unifying narrative, framing the movement, invoking a sense of community through the movement, developing resource mobilization structures, and acting upon political opportunities. Having a greater appreciation for these principles within a target region provides a deeper understanding of how that society works. Second, it provides a pragmatic view of how these RRI sustain themselves within a population. Studying the tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) of RRI provides a better understanding of what works and what fails within a specific society. Those RRI with longevity have refined their TTPs to ensure success, or at least to prevent destruction. Replicating successful RRI TTPs reduces the likelihood of exposing external sponsorship and increases the movement's probability of success. Lastly, implementing a SMT approach to UW helps externally supported RRI campaigns appear ideologically indigenous and therefore, legitimate. This prevents potential negative propaganda targeting the sponsor, which could cause potential strategic setbacks and the movement's ultimate destruction. A SMT approach to UW offers policy makers alternative foreign policy options beyond those of traditional diplomacy and military strikes. To develop these alternative options, however, planners must first identify preexisting organic movements prior to any engagement within a targeted region.

Human domain mapping, as it relates to the SMT approach to UW, provides policy makers a foundational network within which to visualize and understand preexisting opposition movements and leverage points within a targeted society. It provides a clearer picture of the overall strategic network by identifying elite fractures, societal divides, friendly and threatening subgroups, bridges and brokers, and key players. Knowing a society's inner workings then allows policy makers to identify those preexisting RRI whose ideals align with U.S. strategic policy, allowing them to develop strategies to influence the key players and relationships that drive those RRI in favor of U.S. strategic policies. Policy makers cannot initiate this technique at a conflict's beginning; it must be a continuous process that begins in the steady state, or Phase 0, and continues throughout and beyond the conflict. Incorporating human domain mapping in

support of the SMT approach to UW supports the Army's new AOC and the future of ARSOF while simultaneously widens the aperture through which policy makers develop and implement U.S. strategic policy.

IV.   DAESH

A.   DAESH'S NETWORK

Daesh's overall organization can be characterized as a formal command structure and an informal network of brokers and facilitators. At the top of command structure is Daesh's caliph, Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarai, better known as Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. He is supported by his staff, or councils, and oversees the two regional commands of the caliphate, Iraq Regional Command (IRC) and Syria Regional Command (SRC). An emir commands each region, which is further divided into provinces, or *wilayat*. A governor commands each *wilaya* (s.) with his own supporting councils. This military-like structure supports localized operations while still making available orders and directives from superior commands. Daesh's mobilizing structure provides vertical strong ties throughout its command structure, resulting from historical strong and weak horizontal ties established during Saddam Hussein's former regime. These ties, exploited by Daesh leadership while held in U.S.-run detention facilities during Operation Iraqi Freedom and fomented following the U.S. withdrawal, form the foundation on which Daesh was built and continues to hold together the organization.

B.   DAESH SOCIOGRAM VISUAL DESCRIPTION

The sociogram of Daesh (Figure 4), drawn in ORA, is depicted as a two-mode network consisting of aggregated one-mode networks for better visual analysis.[87] The sociogram contains color-coded circles and squares. Circles represent individuals, or agents, and the squares represent organizations or institutions. The colored circles denote the reported location by country for each agent. There are three prominent colors: cyan

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87 The two-mode networks mapped were agent (x) past military affiliations, agent (x) past government affiliations, and agent (x) academic universities, where past military affiliations includes the Republican Guard and jihadi organizations, past government affiliations includes the Baath Party, and academic universities are institutions of higher learning. Incorporating these two-mode networks in the aggregated network highlights the relationships between the agents and the organizations and how these agents are then arrayed in Daesh's network. The ties between agents represent a superior/subordinate relationship while ties between agents and organizations represent an affiliation between the agent and the organization. The resulting sociogram is a better representation of the Daesh command structure and suggests reasons why certain agents hold the positions they do. The two-mode network was then folded into a one-mode network to compute the standard network analysis, which will be discussed later.

represents Syria; green represents Iraq; and red represents an unknown location. This helps distinguish Daesh's two primary regional commands (RCs), the Iraqi regional command (IRC) and the Syrian regional command (SRC). Also depicted are recently established *wilayat* in Libya, Nigeria, Yemen, and Dagestan. Agents in black represent deceased Daesh members. The squares represent historical organizations to which agents have ties. Blue squares represent military and governmental organizations, such as the Baath Party, Iraqi Republican Guard, and various jihadi organizations and green squares represent academic institutions.
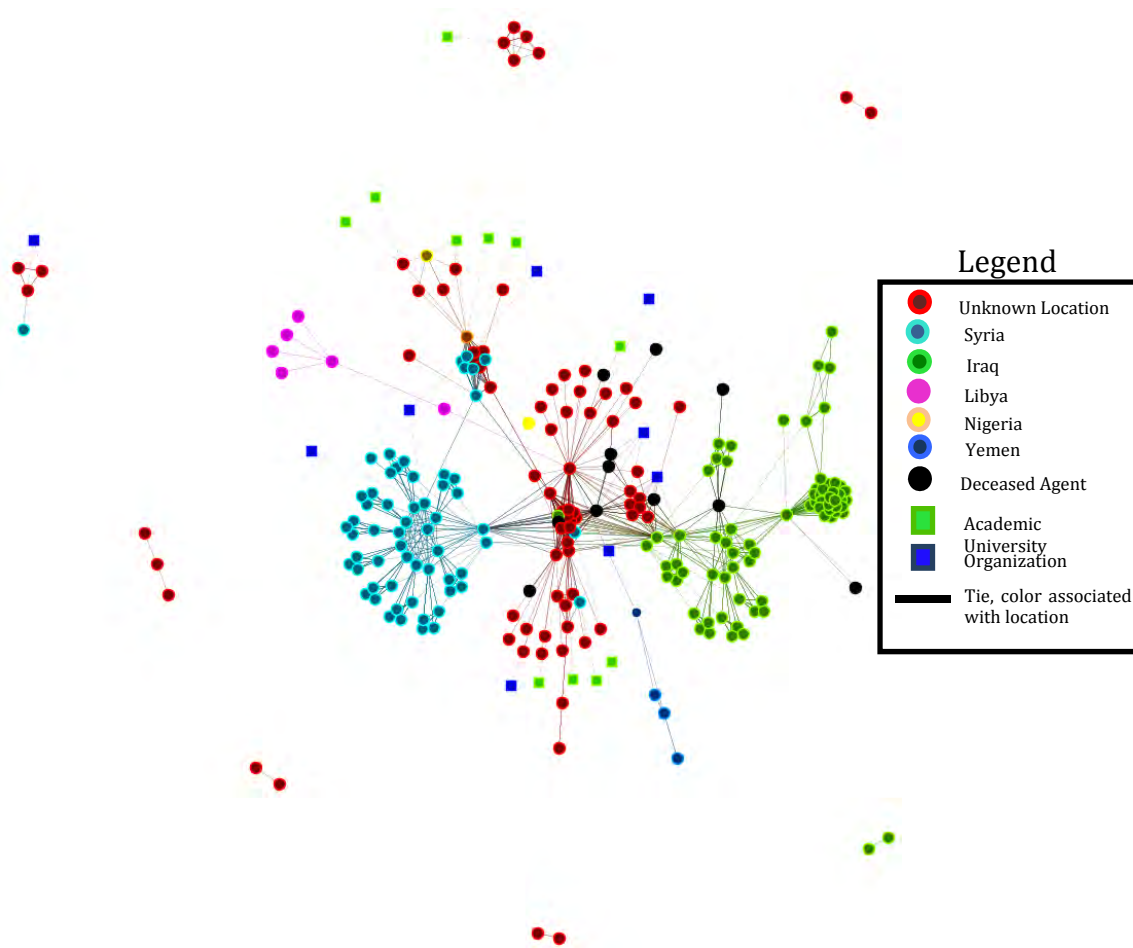

Figure 4.   Daesh command structure sociogram

Positioned centrally in the cluster with majority red nodes, is Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and his senior cabinet. The left cyan portion of the graph represents the SRC chain of command while the right green portion represents the IRC chain of command, from the regional emirs down to the *wilayat* level. Immediately above al-Baghdadi's cabinet are assumed to be various advisors and colleagues of both al-Baghdadi and Mohammed al-Adnani, Daesh's official spokesman. Directly below al-Baghdadi's cabinet and between the two RCs represents al-Baghdadi's Sharia Council, the primarily red circles, and the Yemeni *wilaya* chain of command in dark blue. The large green cluster on the far right portion of the IRC represents *Wilaya* Nineveh's command structure while the large blue and red cluster above the SRC represents a known fighting unit called the Abu Shaheed Unit. The unattached clusters on the sociogram's periphery represent various supporters and known Daesh members who do not have known direct ties to the chain of command.[88]

C.   MOBILIZING STRUCTURES AND NETWORKS

Recalling Chapter II's discussion on organization and mobilizing structures, Daesh follows Tarrow's first and third aspects of organization, that of formal hierarchical organization and the use of abeyance structures, to begin its organization. Daesh leadership developed their own predefined set of goals through their interpretation of Quranic scripture and Salafi doctrine and set out to organize according to those goals. In doing so, those who were recruited had subscribed to the stated goals and doctrine and were placed in supporting leadership positions waiting for the call to mobilization when Daesh officially returned. This set the formal hierarchy depicted in the sociogram (Figure 5). Once in power, Daesh then likely incorporated its new supporters into its subordinate command structure. In a sense, Daesh's organization process followed Tarrow's aspects of organization, permitting them to develop a burgeoning command structure with a

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88 There are three assumption made that are worth mentioning when describing the sociogram. First, it is assumed that if an agent is a council member for a specific wilaya, then he has a relationship with all other council members of that wilaya. Second, wilaya governors have a relationship with each other as senior leaders within each regional command. Finally, similar to the first assumption, all members of al-Baghdadi's cabinet have a tie to each other. These assumptions are the underlying reasons why there are many cliques visually depicted.

supportive base waiting for the official mobilization call. That call came following Mosul's capture and al-Baghdadi's July announcement of the caliphate.
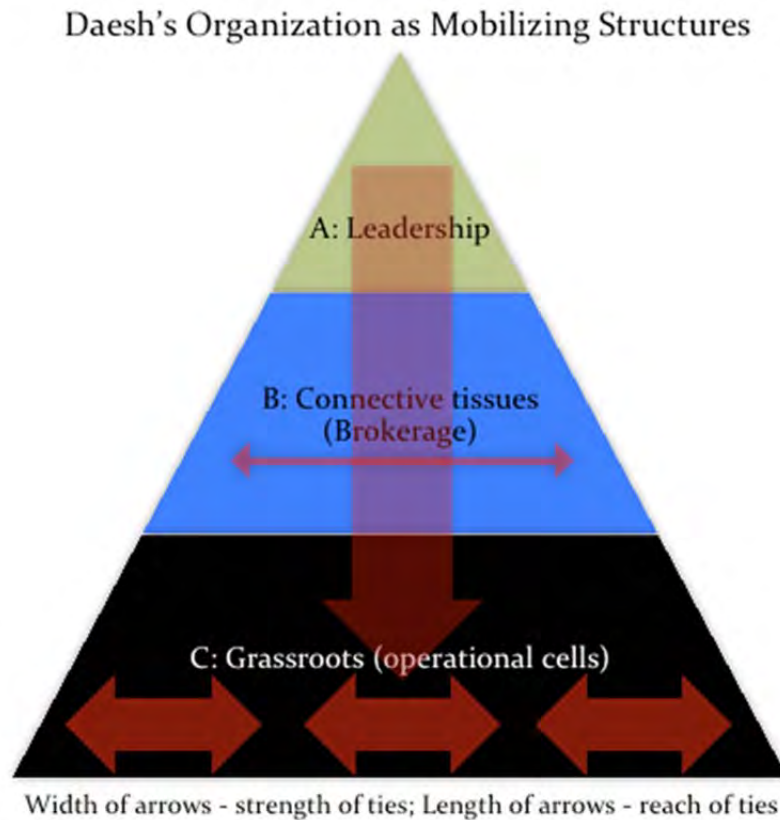
Figure 5.   Daesh's Mobilizing Structures

D.   LEADERSHIP: VERTICAL STRONG TIES

Figure 6 depicts Daesh's superior/subordinate relationships within its command structure. This is a directed sociogram where the more central the actor lies, the more senior his position while the further out from the center the actor, the less senior his position. The most central red circle is Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, the first green circle to his right is the IRC Emir, Fadel Ahmad Abdullah al-Hiyali, and the first blue circle to his left is the SRC Emir, Abu Ali al-Anbari. The red circles surrounding al-Baghdadi represent his cabinet and personal advisors.
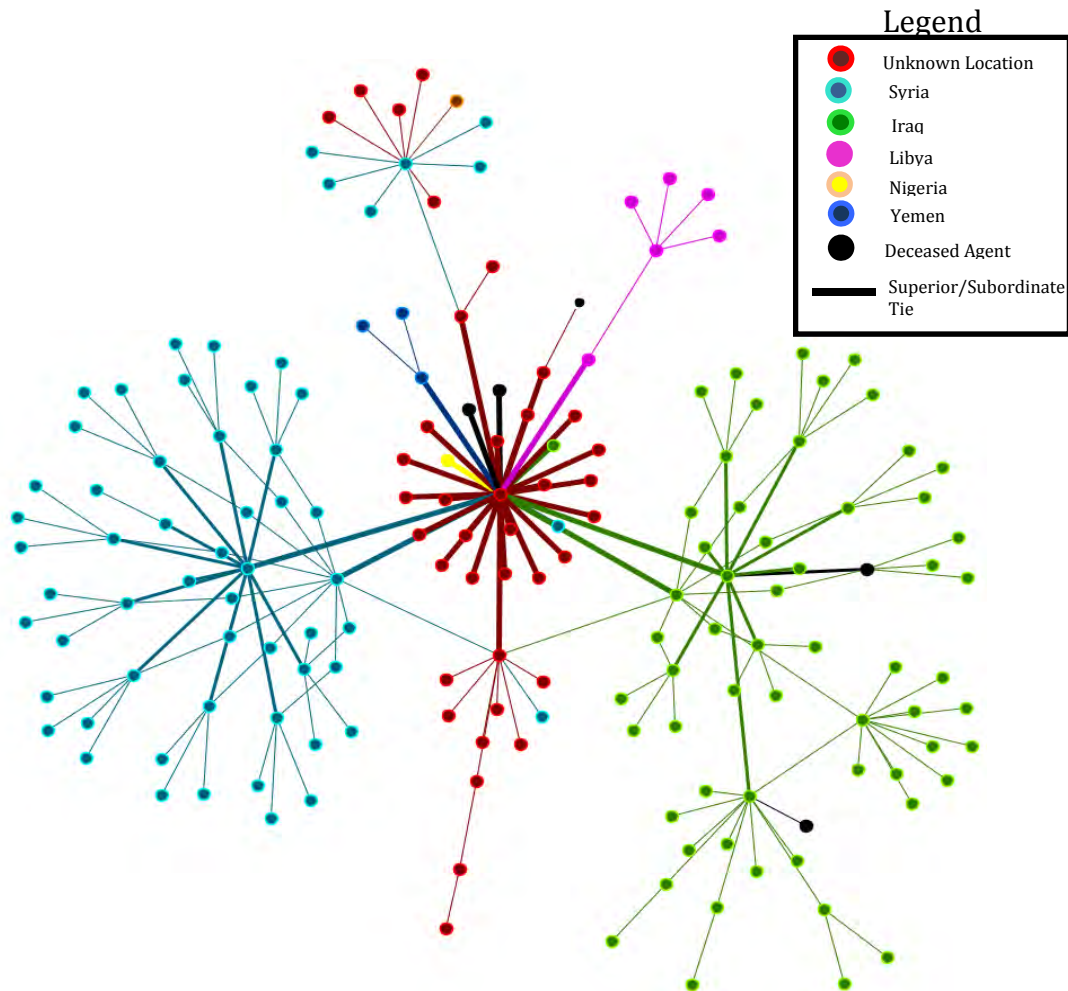
Figure 6.   Daesh superior/subordinate leadership sociogram

Daesh's initial mobilizing structures focused on establishing strong ties among its core leadership, as highlighted by the thicker lines depicted in the sociogram. Those with direct ties to al-Baghdadi and the RC Emirs have thicker ties, while those further out from the center have thinner ties. These thicker lines, or vertical strong ties, provide Daesh leadership with the necessary oversight to maintain strict control throughout the caliphate. Al-Baghdadi developed these vertical strong ties with those hardcore believers, many stemming from Saddam Hussein's former regime, while serving time in U.S.-run detention facilities.

1. Iraqi Baath Party and Republican Guard

Sageman's theory of horizontal weak ties is pertinent to understanding Daesh's recruitment throughout the mid-2000s. It was likely horizontal strong ties stemming from previous occupations that allowed Daesh to operate successfully across a wide swathe of territory. Daesh leveraged the strengths of those with leadership experience from time served in either the Iraqi Baath Party or Republican Guard. Table 2 lists Baath Party and Republican Guard affiliates within Daesh, and Figure 7 shows where these individuals fall within the command structure—red circles represent Daesh members while blue circles represent Daesh members with Baath Party ties. They are either in senior leadership positions, directly tied to al-Baghdadi, or directly tied to other senior leaders, demonstrating the importance Daesh placed on individuals with leadership experiences.[89]

Table 2.   Iraqi Baath Party and Republican Guard affiliates within Daesh

Name	Significance
Adnan Ismail Majem Bilawi	Former Senior Military Commander; Deceased
Abu Saif al-Maslawi	Direct tie to al-Baghdadi
Samir Abd Muhammad	Direct tie to al-Baghdadi; Deceased
Muhammad Nada al-Jbouri	Direct tie to al-Baghdadi
Abu Ahmad al-Alwani	Direct tie to al-Baghdadi
Adnan Latif Hamid al-Sweidawi	*Wilaya* Anbar Governor
Fadel Ahmad Abdullah al-Hiyali	Iraqi Regional Command Emir
Abu Aqeel al-Hamdani	Direct tie to al-Baghdadi
Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri	Direct tie to Iraqi Regional Command Emir; Potential advisor to al-Baghdadi; Deceased
Abu Muhannad Asuwaidawi	Military Commander
Abu Ali al-Anbari	Syrian Regional Command Emir

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89 Omar al-Jaffal, "Baath Spokesman Denies Alliance with Islamic State," *Al-Monitor*, July 14, 2014. Accessed on December 18, 2014. http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2014/07/iraq-baath-spokesman-denies-links-islamic-state.html; Whitcomb, Alexander. "Iraq Expert: 'Insurgency Is as Much Old Baathist as It Is ISIS.'" Rudaw, June 29, 2014. Accessed December 18, 2014. http://rudaw.net/english/interview/29062014; Reuters. "Who Runs Islamic State?" Chicagotribune.com. October 4, 2014. Accessed December 18, 2014. http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/nationworld/chi-who-runs-islamic-state-20141004-story.html.
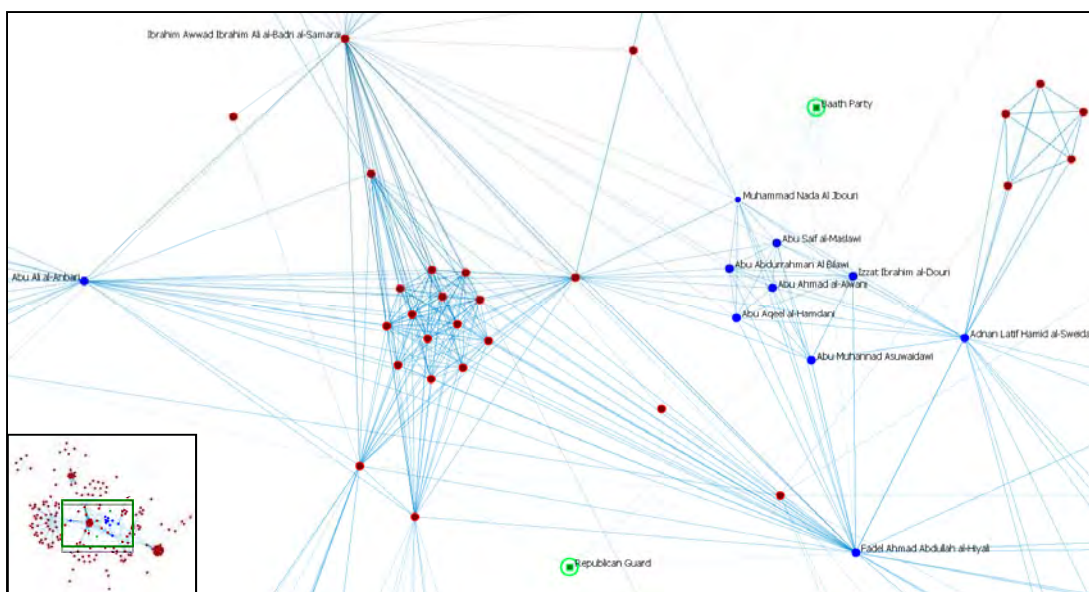
Figure 7.   Former Iraqi Baath Party and Republican Guard members within
Daesh command structure

The significance of this is two-fold. First, these individuals provided the leadership needed to run large government and military organizations. Daesh's success and perceived legitimacy relies on military victories and territorial control, a prerequisite to establish the caliphate according to Daesh's philosophy.[90] Therefore, it was imperative for Daesh to employ those with these experiences. Second, they provided a form of organic leadership capital that commands respect from Deash members and the population under its control. While this analysis cannot directly ascertain the extent of organic leaders, there is a strong likelihood that these individuals then used their previous social bonds to recruit and employ colleagues to serve in leadership positions under their command. This would have ensured a command structure with similar training, expertise, and ideologies and supports the vertical strong ties that permeate the caliphate's mobilizing structures.

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90 Gambhir, "Dabiq: The Strategic Messaging of the Islamic State." 7.

E. BROKERAGE AND CONNECTIVE TISSUES: HORIZONTAL WEAK TIES

As outlined in Chapter II, brokerage depends on three critical components – the right actor serving as a broker, the right medium in which a broker operates, and constant network analysis to adjust for efficient brokerage operations. In the evolution of the Islamic State, Daesh leaders invested time and effort in developing new horizontal weak ties to expand their brokerage capacity. The *jihadi* battlefields and U.S.-run prisons served as the breeding ground for establishing these weak ties,[91] helping to rebuild an organization that was left for dead following the 2007 Sunni Awakening.[92] From that time, Daesh's core leadership began building weak tie relationships with like-minded individuals, who in turn formed their own weak ties, and so on. This process, emanating from Camp Bucca, continued over the years and the results of these efforts are witnessed on a much larger scale today.[93]

1. Camp Bucca

A critical component in al Qaeda's (AQ) recruitment process was the "pre-existing social bonds" where the nearly 80% of the recruits came from either kinship or friendship ties while only 10% joined out of religious beliefs.[94] This concept worked for

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91 Craig Whiteside, "War, Interrupted, Part II: From Prisoners to Rulers," *War on the Rocks*, November 6, 2014. Accessed December 18, 2014. http://warontherocks.com/2014/11/war-interrupted-part-ii-from-prisoners-to-rulers/.

92 COL (Ret) Derek Harvey and Michael Pregent, "The Lessons of the Surge: Defeating ISIS Requires a New Sunni Awakening," *New American Foundation*, June 2014. Accessed December 16, 2015. http://newamerica.org/downloads/IraqAwakening%20FINAL_2.pdf.

93 "Foreign Fighters In Iraq And Syria -- Where Do They Come From?"

94 Marc Sageman, "Global Salafi Jihad: Statement to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States." National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States. July 9, 2003. Accessed on December 15, 2014. http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/hearings/hearing3/witness_sageman.htm. Marc Sageman's testimony to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States demonstrates the importance of ties in recruitment. While he does not mention weak or strong ties specifically, the concept he describes is exactly that. Sageman outlined the typical recruitment process al Qaeda utilized to grow its organization, where those who were already members of al Qaeda used "pre-existing social bonds," either friendship or kinship, to target disenfranchised young Muslim men. Small groups of young homesick men, longing for acceptance and the comfort of likeminded peers, gravitated toward mosques and recognizable settings. They then formed weak ties with others in similar situations, developed friendship clusters, and later moved in together. Over time, these weak ties grew into strong ties and accelerated the radicalization process. Then through one individual's weak tie to the jihad in Afghanistan, the entire cluster immigrated to jihadi training camps to finalize their recruitment.

a growing AQ, the precursor to Daesh.[95] It stands to reason, then, that Daesh would implement this already proven strategy. Assuming this to be true, prime-recruiting conditions existed during Operation Iraqi Freedom when coalition forces arrested disenfranchised young *jihadis* and consolidated them in U.S.-run prisons. It was here, specifically in Camp Bucca, that Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi began developing ties in the hopes of uniting disenfranchised Sunni insurgents under the Daesh flag.[96]

During the early stages of Daesh's development, conditions in U.S.-run detention facilities served as the proper medium for Daesh's initial brokers to operate. Al-Baghdadi took advantage of his time in Camp Bucca to develop critical relationships with likeminded detainees to support Daesh's future rise. He found the right men to serve as his core leaders and who would likely serve as future brokers following their release from prison. Figure 8 depicts those that served time in Camp Bucca. One can see that those who spent time in Camp Bucca, presumably at the same time as al-Baghdadi or with his close confidants, were later rewarded with senior leadership positions. Given Sageman's theory, it would follow that those who were closely associated with these individuals, i.e. associates with pre-existing social bonds or horizontal weak ties, were likely placed in leadership positions as well.

Given the right operational medium, Camp Bucca, and a collection of the right men, all Daesh leadership needed was to continually monitor the network following their release to ensure the chosen brokers operated appropriately following their own release. Given Daesh's speedy success, it is fair to suggest that their brokerage operations were monitored appropriately.

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95 "What Is Islamic State?" *BBC News*. September 26, 2014, accessed on December 18, 2014. http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-29052144.

96 Martin Chulov, "Isis: The inside Story," *The Guardian*, December 11, 2014, accessed on December 19, 2014. http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/dec/11/-sp-isis-the-inside-story.
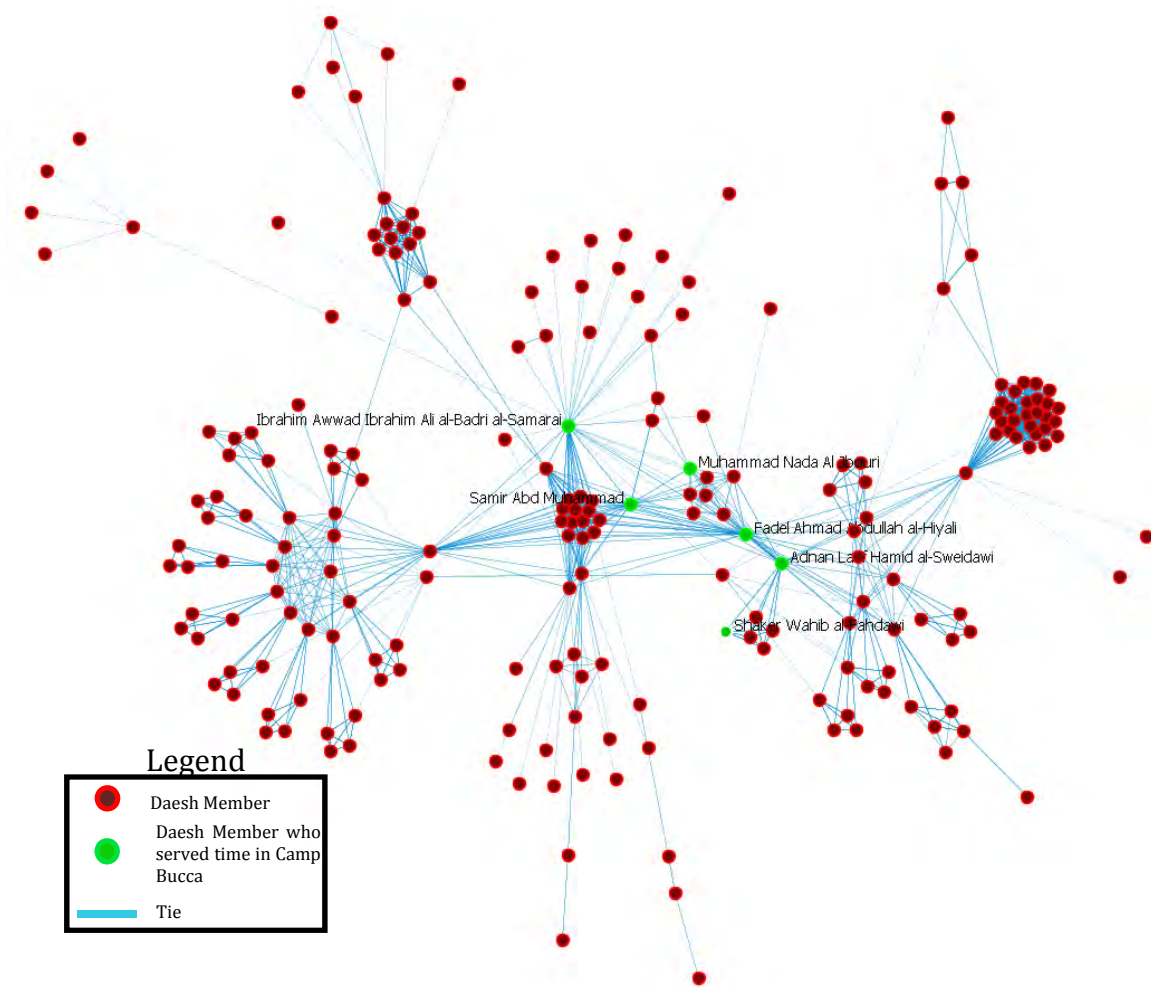
Figure 8.   Daesh leaders who served time in Camp Bucca

2.   **Brokerage and Brokerage Potential**

Brokerage and brokerage potential provides analysts a better understanding of a network's inner workings, its foundational structure, and its critical facilitating nodes. In a sense, it is these nodes, and their associated strong and weak ties, that serve as the skeletal frame responsible for holding the network together. Identifying them and understanding their relational intricacies offers a clearer picture of network operations, thus allowing strategists to develop more efficient disruption strategies. The metrics used in this thesis to identify these individuals are betweenness centrality, boundary spanner potential, and Burt's measure of constraint. "*Betweenness centrality* measures the extent

to which each actor lies on the shortest path between all other actors in a network."[97] Actors with high betweenness values are have the potential to be influential and have a greater tendency of bringing together multiple groups of people that may not otherwise be associated. ORA defines *Boundary spanner potential* as those nodes that have the ability to connect disconnected groups,[98] and it is calculated by dividing an actor's betweenness centrality score by their degree centrality score, which is simply a count of their ties.[99] Ron Burt developed his measure of constraint in order to identify those gaps in a network that bridging ties span.[100] It measures "the degree to which each node… is constrained from acting because of its existing links to other nodes."[101] Therefore, the less constrained a node, the greater brokerage potential and a higher sense of autonomy it possesses.[102] In other words, lower levels of constraint indicate higher levels of brokerage potential. Together these metrics provide in-depth empirical measures that highlight nodes with actual and potential bridging and brokerage capabilities. Table 3 represents the brokerage metrics used in this research.

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97 Everton, *Disrupting Dark Networks*, 13.

98 ORA 2.3.6 (Carley 2001-2011) can be downloaded for free for noncommercial use from the ORA website: http://www.casos.cs.cmu.edu/projects/ora/.

99 Everton, *Disrupting Dark Networks*, 12.

100 Ronald S. Burt, *Structural Holes: The Social Structure of Competition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992).

101 Ibid.

102 Everton, *Disrupting Dark Networks*, 255.

Table 3.   Brokerage metrics[103]

Rank	Betweenness Centrality	Value	Boundary Spanner Potential	Value	Burt's Constraint	Value
1	Fadel Ahmad Abdullah al-Hiyali	0.156	Libya Emir	0.1439	SYRIA SHARIA COUNCIL LEADER MUFTI	0.038
2	Abu Ali al-Anbari	0.118	Abu Abdullah al-Kurdi	0.0737	Wilayat Derna Governor	0.04
3	Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarai	0.106	Yemen Emir	0.0576	Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarai	0.0533
4	Abdallah Yousef Abu Bakr al-Khatouni	0.091	SYRIA SHARIA COUNCIL LEADER MUFTI	0.053	Abu Abdullah al-Kurdi	0.054
5	Abdullah Ahmed al-Meshedani	0.049	Abu Ali al-Anbari	0.0501	Abu Ali al-Anbari	0.0967
6	Abu Shaheed	0.041	Wilayat Derna Governor	0.0463	Abu Muhammad al-Adnani as-Shami	0.102
7	Abu Mohammed al-Aani	0.032	Wilayat Salahedden Governor	0.0406	Yemen Emir	0.1111
8	Ahmed Mohsin Khalal al-Jihaishi	0.024	Abu Muhammad Ali Platt	0.037	Abdallah Yousef Abu Bakr al-Khatouni	0.1139
9	Abu Abdullah al-Kurdi	0.024	Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samarai	0.0283	Abu Mohammed al-Aani	0.1245
10	Adnan Latif Hamid al-Sweidawi	0.021	Fadel Ahmad Abdullah al-Hiyali	0.0278	Western Mosul Leader	0.1483
11	SYRIA SHARIA COUNCIL LEADER MUFTI	0.021	Abdallah Yousef Abu Bakr al-Khatouni	0.0274	Western Mosul Military Commander	0.1483
12	Wissam Abed Zaid al-Zubeidi	0.02	Abul Layth al-Thayqami	0.0254	Eastern Mosul Military Commander	0.1483
13	Abu Muhammad al-Adnani as-Shami	0.019	Abu Shaheed	0.0215	Eastern Mosul Leader	0.1483
14	Wilayat al-Janoob Governor	0.016	Sector Sharia Court Shar'I	0.0201	Wilayat Ninawa Security Council Leader	0.1483
15	Wilayat Diyala Governor	0.016	Ahmed Mohsin Khalal al-Jihaishi	0.0197	Ahmad Sadun Ahmad al-Hamadani	0.1506
16	Ahmed Abdul Kader al-Jazza	0.016	Abdullah Ahmed al-Meshedani	0.0185	Abdeljabbar al-Rawi	0.1506
17	Samir Abd Muhammad	0.015	State Sharia Court Shar'I	0.0172	Tarkhan Batirashvili	0.1596
18	Tarkhan Batirashvili	0.015	Abu Mohammed al-Aani	0.0171	Fadel Ahmad Abdullah al-Hiyali	0.1603
19	Wilayat al-Badiyah Governor	0.014	Wissam Abed Zaid al-Zubeidi	0.0153	Ammar Saed al-Juburi	0.1652
20	Wilayat Halab Governor	0.014	Sheikh Zoher	0.0147	Sheikh Turki bin Mubarak bin Abdullah al-Benali	0.1747

3.   Daesh's Brokerage and Brokerage Potential

Daesh's network is framed around a number of key individuals whose duties and responsibilities provide Daesh its operational coordination. The top three agents are Fadel Ahmad Abdullah al-Hiyali, Abu Ali al-Anbari, and Ibrahim Awwad Ibrahim Ali al-Badri al-Samari, the IRC emir, SRC emir, and caliph respectively; they represent three of the most senior ranking commanders within Daesh's network. Both al-Hiyali and al-Anbari served as intelligence officers in Saddam Hussein's Republican Guard, suggesting they have connections with former Republican Guard factions with similar ideologies and convictions. This would have allowed them to serve as brokers in recruiting those factions into Daesh's movement. The three have the highest betweenness centrality values, demonstrating their actual brokerage value, and rate in the top ten and top twenty for boundary spanner potential and Burt's constraint value, respectively. The combination of these values demonstrates their importance in terms of coordinating major clusters within the network, coinciding with the visual analysis of the network.

The next two actors of note are the Iraqi and Syrian Sharia Council Muftis, Abu Abdullah al-Kurdi and Syria Sharia Council Leader Mufti (actual name is unknown). Their betweenness centrality values rate them in the top eleven, demonstrating the importance Daesh has placed on the Sharia Council and its leadership. When comparing their brokerage potential, however, both individuals rank in the top four of boundary spanner potential and Burt's constraint value. This may be the most significant find within this data as traditional thinking may place more influence on the regional emirs and the caliph given their duty positions. The boundary spanner potential and Burt's constraint values, however, suggest that the Sharia Council leaders' brokerage potential are statistically more important than the regional emirs and the caliph. Reports have suggested that the Sharia council is the true decision maker within the caliphate.[104] Thus, it is noteworthy that Abu Mohammed al-Aani, al-Baghdadi's senior Sharia Council leader within his cabinet, scores within the top ten for both betweenness centrality and

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104 Hashem, Ali, "Who Holds the Real Power in IS?" *Al-Monitor*, February 19, 2015, accessed on March 2, 2015. http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/02/islamic-state-sharia-council-power.html.

Burt's constraint value, and ranks eighteenth in boundary spanner potential. The SNA metrics, therefore, lend support to the notion that the Sharia Council wields significant power, both actual and potential, within Daesh.

Additional significant individuals are Daesh *wilayat* governors. Three *wilaya* governors to note are Nineveh's al-Khatouni, Kirkuk's al-Jihaishi, and Anbar's al-Sweidawi. Both Kirkuk and Anbar's governors are significant because of the importance each region plays in Daesh's Iraq conquest. Kirkuk is home to Daesh's toughest resistance, the Kurdish Pershmerga, and continues to be one of the only Iraqi regions that have experienced military successes against Daesh. Anbar's historical significance to Daesh, and to a larger extent Iraq, cannot be overstated. As the birthplace of the Sunni Awakening that ousted al-Qaeda in Iraq and home to the Sunni Triangle's, Daesh's desire to control Anbar is undeniable. Therefore the importance of both Kirkuk and Anbar's governors supports their high betweenness centrality.

The governor of significance, however, is Abdallah Yousef Abu Bakr al-Khatouni, the *Wilaya* Nineveh Governor. While his metrics may be skewed because of the concentration of nodes coded from Nineveh, it is interesting to note that Nineveh contains the city of Mosul. Mosul plays a significant role in Daesh's recent history. First, al-Baghdadi announced the caliphate's establishment in Mosul's grand mosque. Second, Mosul's capture marks Daesh's first significant military victory. Third, after its fall, with the Iraq Security Forces deserting its posts and equipment for Daesh capture, Mosul has been a source of motivation and pride for the Daesh faithful. Finally, Mosul continues to be the largest city under Daesh control throughout the caliphate. Therefore, while the data may be skewed, it is logical that the provincial governor that oversees Mosul would be an influential member in the command structure. Given this logic, the *Wilaya* Raqqah governor, who controls the de-facto Deash capital of ar-Raqqah, would be an influential actor within the SRC. The empirical data, however, does not currently support this assumption.

The final Daesh member to note is a senior member in al-Baghdadi's cabinet, Abdullah Ahmed al-Meshedani. He controls the Fighter Assistance Council, a crucial

position given the importance Daesh places on its military.[105] While he does not register in the top twenty in terms of Burt's constraint, this does not diminish his overall potential value. Foreign fighters make up a significant portion of Daesh's network with more immigrating to the caliphate with relative frequency.[106] It is imperative, then, that the individual who manages the flow of foreign fighters is both influential, a strong leader, and connected with multiple groups throughout the network in order to deploy incoming foreign fighters. The SNA metrics support this assumption.

Comparing the sociogram's visual analysis and the brokerage metrics supports the idea that Daesh is a hierarchical organization whose structure allows for a centralized leadership structure controlling a decentralized operating structure. Given the redundancy of council positions throughout the command structure, each can operate as an autonomous organization while still making available orders and direction from senior commands. The actors who score highest in terms of betweenness centrality are centrally located in the sociogram, suggesting their brokerage role within the organization. The remaining top ten, save Abu Shaheed, each hold dominating positions in the sociogram as well as within the Daesh command structure relative to their compatriots. Therefore, both the visual and analytical analyses have highlighted potentially key influential actors within Daesh.

F.   OPERATIONAL CELLS: HORIZONTAL STRONG TIES

Daesh's operational level cells, or *wilaya* command structures, consist of multiple cliques held together by horizontal strong ties. These cliques provide uniformity in governance, a critical component in Daesh's mobilizing structure, to provide a sense of operational cohesion. Each *wilaya*, headed by a governor, is comprised of identical command structures consisting of four primary councils – Sharia Council, Shura Council, Military Council, and Security Council. Together they regulate daily life according to the

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105 Harleen K. Gambhir, "Dabiq: The Strategic Messaging of the Islamic State," *Institute for the Study of War*, August 15, 2014. 7. https://www.understandingwar.org/backgrounder/dabiq-strategic-messaging-islamic-state.

106 "Foreign Fighters In Iraq And Syria—Where Do They Come From?" *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, accessed on December 16, 2014. http://www.rferl.org/contentinfographics/infographics/26584940.html.

rules and regulations outlined by al-Baghdadi and his senior cabinet. The horizontal strong ties within these cliques are the unifying factor within the *wilayat* command structure. Given Daesh's aforementioned recruitment methodology, the leaders of these councils likely utilized their own horizontal strong ties to recruit locally to build their councils. This local recruitment likely offered a sense of leadership capital within their own *wilaya*, helping to further legitimize Daesh's population control.

According to recently released documents from the alleged Deash mastermind, Samir Abd Muhammad al-Khlifawi a.k.a. Haji Bakr, controlling the population was paramount in establishing the caliphate, more so than "fanatical religious convictions."[107] Therefore, it was imperative that Deash leadership recruited calculating individuals capable of manipulating religious fervor in favor of Daesh's grand plan. This involved filling Daesh ranks with individuals who served under Saddam Hussein's regime and could incorporate those leadership experiences in Daesh's formation. While governmental and military leadership experience proved crucial in forming Daesh, so too was espionage and surveillance expertise. In this secretive world, trust plays a vital role and al-Khalifawi required individuals he could trust to ensure his master plan was executed unimpeded.[108] As witnessed within Daesh's senior level leadership, horizontal strong ties stemming from Saddam Hussein's former regime likely provided this trust at the operational level as well.

G.   CONCLUSION: DAESH'S MOBILIZING STRUCTURES

This chapter discussed Daesh's formation through a social network analysis and mobilizing structures. It demonstrated that Daesh's overall network is characterized by a unified leadership command structure with vertical strong ties that permeate the entire network. These vertical strong ties originated in Saddam Hussein's regime, were rebuilt and reinforced throughout the U.S. occupation of Iraq, and came to fruition in 2014

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107 Christoph Reuter, "The Terror Strategist: Secret Files Reveal the Structure of Islamic State," *Spiegel Online*, April 18, 2015, sec. International, accessed on April 18, 2015. http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/islamic-state-files-show-structure-of-islamist-terror-group-a-1029274.html#spRedirectedFrom=www&referrrer=http://m.facebook.com.

108 Ibid.

during Daesh's blitzkrieg in northern Iraq. Conditions in U.S. detainee camps permitted Daesh to develop its brokerage capacity through horizontal weak ties, allowing Daesh to pool together highly skilled men with the necessary expertise to support Daesh's rise. From these horizontal weak ties grew horizontal strong ties, forming the operational level cliques needed to control the population and solidify the caliphate's establishment. It is the breadth and depth of this tie construct, as demonstrated by the supporting SNA metrics, that provides Daesh the strength and resiliency to not only endure, but also outlast, the international coalition's attempts to defeat it. This also means these brokers have the potential to be internal fracturing points, a critical assumption when developing a strategy to trigger Daesh's implosion.

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V.   A SOCIALLY UNCONVENTIONAL STRATEGY

Implementing an alternative strategy to combat Daesh using Irregular Warfare (IW) as an analytical framework requires a distinct and separate construct than that of traditional military thinking. IW is a violent struggle for legitimacy and influence.[109] As such, this chapter discusses a strategy designed to undermine Daesh's sources of legitimacy and influence, derived from social movement theory. It discusses three lines of effort to implode Daesh's cohesion: develop a counter-narrative, disrupt Daesh's network, and limit its political opportunities. It should be noted that results of this strategy would be hard to detect in the near term; thus, it will require strategic patience and persistence. Additionally, this thesis data is not the most current available because the data collection was bounded from January to March of 2015. This problem set is changing daily. Implementing portions of this strategy, specifically the kinetic targeting operations, requires updated research and data collection.

In the end, this strategy has three goals. First, it seeks to provide a counter-narrative highlighting Daesh's illegitimacy in order to dry up Daesh's recruiting pool and prevent Daesh from growing its human capital. Second, it offers network disruption strategies through a combination of kinetic operations and social unrest intended to fracture Daesh's cohesion. Finally, it intends to prevent the caliphate's future growth by limiting internal and external political opportunities.

A.   THE COUNTER-NARRATIVE

The first line of effort requires a strong, resonating counter-narrative consisting of three primary themes. The first should highlight the fraudulent nature of Daesh's governance and its overall existence. Daesh claims it is the caliphate's protectorate, as preordained by Allah, to rule over the one true religion, Daesh's extreme version of Sunni Islam. This notion, however, is highly contested in the Muslim world, most notably by

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109 Department of Defense, 2007, *Irregular Warfare (IW) Joint Operating Concept (JOC)*, Washington DC: Government Printing Office. http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/concepts/joint_concepts/joc_iw_v1.pdf. Refer to Chapter III for a detailed doctrinal discussion of countering Daesh.

senior level defectors from within al-Baghdadi's Sharia Council.[110] To develop this theme, strategists must first gain an understanding as to why those who defected did so and then intensify their reasoning into a stronger message. Wrapping this theme around Islamic jurisprudence and literature is essential for its development. It must be clear enough so that other individuals can substantiate its claims through their own interpretations of the Quran and the Hadith, which are the same sets of Islamic literature that Daesh uses for its own justification. The aforementioned defectors are the individuals needed to do this for several reasons. First, they provide a sense of religious legitimacy given their senior positions within al-Baghdadi's Sharia Council. Second, they have an intimate understanding of how the caliphate operates and can craft a penetrating message. Third, they possess a profound knowledge of the Islamic literature needed to craft that message. Finally, they possess a sense of organic leadership capital that will lend credibility to the theme.

The second theme highlights the petty political nature of Daesh's leadership, in which former Baathists are using Daesh as a platform from which to regain control of Iraq. This theme should not imply that the official Baath Party supports Daesh, but rather that a group of power-hungry individuals with Baath Party ties are trying to return to dominance given the recent power vacuum following the United States' withdraw in 2011. Given the structural similarities of Daesh's chain of command to that of Saddam Hussein's regime, the secretive roots on which it was formed, and the pervasive nature of Iraqi nationals throughout its chain of command,[111] it is reasonable to suggest that Daesh's intent to establish an Islamic State is a thin veil masking its true intentions. This can be a powerful theme, especially to foreign fighters in Syria who are fighting out of religious fervor. Baathists, therefore, are using Daesh as a means to recruit human capital, primarily through foreign fighters, in order to pave their way back to prominence. So while Daesh may claim religious benevolence, this is purely a farce to build an army

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110 Ali Hashem, "Who Holds the Real Power in IS?" *Al-Monitor*, February 19, 2015, accessed on March 2, 2015. http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2015/02/islamic-state-sharia-council-power.html.

111 Reuter, "The Terror Strategist: Secret Files Reveal the Structure of Islamic State."

strong enough to control the Sunni population in route to retaking control of Iraq. This theme leads to the final theme, that of Iraqi nationalism.

The third theme must revitalize Iraqi nationalism. This may be the most difficult given the exclusive nature of the Shiite-dominated government of Iraq (GOI) and the Iranian influence in Baghdad. It is imperative, then, that the United States pressures the GOI into uniting Iraq under one flag by including Sunnis in national governance. This serves two purposes. First, it offers the Sunni tribes an organic sense of belonging. Until this occurs, alienated Sunni tribes have no other recourse but to support Daesh, be it actively or passively, for their own self-preservation. Currently, Daesh is the only "state" entity that provides Sunni tribes with a voice and a sense of power within Iraq. Until the Sunnis have options beyond terrorist organizations such as Daesh, al Qaeda, or some future extremist organizations, they will continue to offer their support to the organization that looks out for the Sunnis' best interests. Second, this theme undermines both Iranian efforts to control Baghdad and Daesh's anti-Shiite rhetoric. Iran and Daesh benefit from a disjointed Iraq. A unified Iraqi nation serves to counter Iranian influence while simultaneously marginalize Daesh's appeal.

Developing the appropriate themes, however, is only the first step. The second, and arguably more important, step is the delivery. The counter-narrative needs an appropriate mouthpiece, which in turn requires an appropriate dissemination platform. Those chosen to serve as the counter-narrative's voice must possess high levels of social capital capable of putting a socially resonating spin on the themes. That message must then be delivered on platforms beyond basic interviews and media releases, but must be permanent and pervasive across all domains – social media, chat rooms, blogs, weekly sermons at mosques, Islamic study groups, and social events to name a few examples. No matter how accurate, or perceived to be accurate, these themes may be, if they are not delivered in an unrelenting, widespread manner that can be effectively absorbed by masses, the counter-narrative will, in effect, be a moot point.

B.   DISRUPTING THE NETWORK

The second line of effort focuses on disrupting Daesh's network through three lines of operations at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels. To begin, kinetic operations should continue targeting Daesh leadership at the strategic level. The previous chapter identified several key individuals, for example the two regional emirs, Abu Ali al-Anbari and Fadel Ahmad Abdullah al-Hiyali. While Daesh likely has identified replacements in the event its strategic level leaders are eliminated, one can assume those replacements are less competent than the primaries. The primary leaders were chosen because of their leadership experiences in governmental and military organizations, otherwise they would not have assumed those leadership roles at the onset. The long-term effectiveness of kinetic targeting operations, however, can be highly uncertain given the potential "shadowy cabinet" made up of Baathist individuals.[112] Additionally, given Daesh's organizational maturity and pronounced religious motivations, kinetically targeting its leadership is unlikely to completely destroy the movement as mature, religious organizations have demonstrated resiliency in the face of decapitation strategies.[113] Regardless, eliminating Daesh's leadership will disrupt the network and its overall command and control capacity to a degree.

The second line of operation requires disrupting Daesh's brokerage capabilities at the operational level. This line of operation should be the priority to induce Daesh's implosion, as Daesh's brokerage operations serve as its unifying force. This disruption strategy has two approaches. The first approach is to identify and eliminate Daesh brokers. Chapter IV identified some senior level brokers, the Iraqi and Syrian Sharia Council Muftis, *wilayat* governors, and Abdullah Ahmed al-Meshedani for example. This, like targeting Daesh senior leadership, is also highly uncertain. Identifying Daesh brokers is very difficult, especially at the grassroots level, and conducting operations to eliminate them is even harder still. The well-earned results, however, would help fracture Daesh's network, leading to a less cohesive organization. The second approach is to pre-

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112 Reuter, "The Terror Strategist: Secret Files Reveal the Structure of Islamic State."

113 Jenna Jordan, "When heads roll: Assessing the effectiveness of leadership decapitation," *Security Studies* 18, no. 4 (2009): 719–755. http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09636410903369068.

emptively co-opt Sunni groups to make them unavailable to Daesh. Regardless of Daesh's brokerage capabilities, if there are no groups for Daesh to broker, then Daesh's brokerage capabilities are a non-starter. Either way, preventing Daesh from maintaining a unified organization, i.e. minimizing its brokerage capacity, will severely disrupt its operational capabilities.

The final line of operation disrupts Daesh's tactical capabilities through a three-pronged approach. The first approached stems from the aforementioned co-optation of Sunni groups. In addition to preventing brokerage capacity, co-opting Sunni groups eliminates pools from which Daesh can recruit or coerce membership. It is widely accepted that gaining and maintaining Sunni allegiances is critical in defeating Daesh. This is evidenced by Iranian-backed Popular Mobilization Units tabling their religious differences to partner with Sunni tribes in tactical efforts to defeat Daesh.[114] In order for Iran to advance its strategic interest in Baghdad, it must first protect Baghdad by assisting it in eliminating the threat that is Daesh. If Iran then proves to be that pivotal force in Daesh's defeat, Iran will have the freedom to continue its influence campaign in Iraq while encouraging a stronger Iraq/Iran relationship. In the end, Iraq will be pulled further into Iran's sphere of influence by helping defeat the threat to Shiite dominance, and further solidify itself as the regional power player. To counter this, the United States must beat Iran to the Sunni tribes and co-opt these pre-existing social Sunni movements while simultaneously encouraging the GOI to be more nationalistic and include Sunnis in national level governance.

The second approach involves co-opting local civil services within the caliphate to begin sowing the seeds of civil unrest. To do so in an oppressive regime, such as the caliphate, the movement must be rooted in organizations that are shielded from regime attacks because those organizations are as integral to the regime as they are to the population in which the movement exists. Like Poland's Solidarity movement of the

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114 Deborah Amos, "In Tikrit Offensive, Local Sunnis, Shiite Militias Are Unlikely Allies," *NPR.org*, March 19, 2015, accessed on April 29, 2015. http://www.npr.org/blogs/parallels/2015/03/19/394099648/in-tikrit-offensive-shiite-militias-form-unlikely-alliance.

1980s, where the resistance was heavily involved in the Catholic Church,[115] a resistance movement founded in the caliphate's civil services can provide that same protective shield. Much of Daesh's clientelist-like propaganda focuses on its state-provided services, which includes water, electricity, gas, sewage and trash removal, education, medical care, and security. While Daesh touts its ability to provide these amenities, its ability to do so effectively remains in question.[116] Herein lays the exploitable vulnerability. Co-opting civil services and encouraging subversive activities will not only exacerbate the already tense relations between Daesh and the population, but will also promote civil unrest through collective action. As the collective action grows, with the intent of reaching Arab Spring popularity, Daesh's inability to control the population will both undermine its credibility and encourage its implosion.

The final approach is to map the Daesh-affiliated *Dawah* offices throughout the region and begin interdiction operations to reduce their influence. The *Dawah* offices, Islamic missionary centers, were instrumental in Daesh's rise. These centers opened under the auspices of supporting local communities. In fact, their intent was to provide Daesh a platform to disseminate its message, collect massive amounts of information about the local community, and serve as a base of operations for Daesh spies. In the end, they were critical in producing the information Daesh leadership required for its territorial takeover.[117] Mapping out the *Dawah* network will shed light on Daesh beginnings, illuminate how Daesh was able to spread between Syria and Iraq so quickly, provide insight on local level influencers, and provide greater options with which to develop additional disruption strategies.

C.   LIMITING POLITICAL OPPORTUNITIES

The final line of effort requires limiting Daesh's political opportunities through two lines of operation, external and internal. Externally, the United States should help

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115 Maryjane Osa, *Solidarity and Contention: Networks of Polish Oppositions* (Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 2003), 117–168.

116 Erika Solomon, "The Isis Economy: Meet the New Boss," *Financial Times*, January 5, 2015 accessed on April 29, 2015. http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/b2c6b5ca-9427-11e4-82c7-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3Yk5iS97h.

117 Reuter, "The Terror Strategist: Secret Files Reveal the Structure of Islamic State."

regional partners enhance their border security to stem the influx of foreign fighters. This assistance should extend beyond the Middle East into North Africa and Mediterranean nations, as a vast majority of foreign fighters destined for the caliphate travel through countries like Tunisia, Morocco, Libya, and Cyprus.[118] While these countries would benefit from this support at traditional border crossing sites, the focus should shift to non-traditional border crossing mechanisms, such as smuggling routes, ratlines, and facilitators. Disrupting Daesh's human capital flow would degrade its military capabilities, constrain its basic life sustaining services, and support the previously outlined network disruption strategies.

The second line of operation requires building an internal, Sunni-dominate coalition to undermine Daesh's exploitation of disenfranchised Sunni groups. This serves two purposes beyond that of co-opting Sunni groups to promote the aforementioned civil unrest. First, it continues to dry up Daesh's local support base and, second, it undermines Iranian efforts to create a Shiite-dominate, anti-Daesh coalition. Critical to this line of operation is the full support from the GOI. Without an inclusive GOI, Sunni groups will continue to remain on the fringe and look to outside organizations for power and acceptance. To bring the GOI in line, the U.S. support that includes arms, personnel, training, and finances must no longer be unconditional; to continue receiving U.S. aid, the GOI must include Sunnis equally. This stipulation cannot be negotiable. As long as the United States provides unconditional aid to the GOI, it will continue to operate in an exclusive manner, as encouraged by Iran, and further alienate half of its population. The GOI must be willing to govern the entirety of its citizenry equally,[119] otherwise it risks having a portion of its population in a constant state of insurrection. This line of effort intends to further isolate the caliphate such that over time its expansion opportunities would be reduced to zero.

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118 Alessandria Mesi and Hanna Sender, "How Foreign Fighters Joining ISIS Travel To The Islamic State Group's 'Caliphate,'" *International Business Times*, March 3, 2015, accessed on April 30, 2015. http://www.ibtimes.com/how-foreign-fighters-joining-isis-travel-islamic-state-groups-caliphate-1833812.

119 Eli Berman, Joseph H. Felter, and Jacob H. Shapiro, "The Super Smart Way to Dismantle ISIS," *The National Interest*, February 27, 2015, accessed on March 3, 2015. http://nationalinterest.org/feature/the-super-smart-way-dismantle-isis-12333.

D.   CONCLUSION

Given the rapid manner in which Daesh absorbed portions of Iraq and Syria, it is natural to look for an equally rapid response in which to defeat Daesh. This problem set, however, has been developing since the United States invaded Iraq in 2003. Daesh's strategic patience following its near destruction in 2007 is one to admire and should not be taken lightly. This demonstrates its ability and willingness to plan and execute operations with long-term strategic goals in mind. Daesh's expertly crafted and methodically executed campaign plan allowed it to envelope its entire society, leaving nothing to chance by controlling every aspect of daily life. Its resonating narrative, deeply rooted in Islamic ideology, tugs at the hearts and minds of its recruiting audience to ensure a constant flow of human capital. Its military operations are planned and led by top-notch commanders with a wealth of experience stemming from Saddam Hussein's regime. Its governmental leadership is well-versed in controlling a population, also stemming from the former regime. While this seems like a combination destined for success, its drawbacks are many.

The caliphate is not sustainable if the United States executes an appropriate counter-strategy focused on these drawbacks. Daesh's narrative, while deeply rooted in Islamic lore, can be undermined if the United States leverages the appropriate individuals to develop a counter-narrative that calls into question Daesh's perceived legitimacy. Continued pressure on Daesh's military through targeted kinetic strikes and sustained pressure from Iraq's military, with conditional U.S. support, will eventually degrade Daesh's military capacity altogether while simultaneously undermine Iranian efforts to control Iraq. Further targeting Daesh's governmental leadership, combined with co-optation of key social populations that include Sunni groups and civil services, will degrade Daesh's ability to control the population and promote civil unrest. Combined, these lines of effort can contribute to Daesh's implosion. Once Daesh begins to fracture under its own weight, the GOI can then systematically reestablish its control over lost territory with the help of newly integrated Sunni groups and U.S. support. This combined strategy, however, requires more in depth knowledge of Daesh's network.

To support this strategy, future research should continue mapping the Daesh network as this thesis merely mapped its strategic and operational levels of command based on available open source information. This thesis outlined the importance of human domain mapping in Chapter III and was able to demonstrate this by identifying Daesh's Baathist roots prior to the mass media's reporting on the subject. Continued mapping efforts will likely identify additional groups and individuals that are key Daesh influencers. It is recommended that Saddam Hussein's entire Baath Party and Republican Guard be mapped out, beginning with the known entities identified within this research. These efforts will likely illuminate ties to others with similar experiences and ideological mindsets, thus increasing the probability those individuals are Daesh members as well. There is an insatiable desire to know who is in Daesh, from lowly foreign fighters to the most senior commanders. Human domain mapping not only provides that knowledge, but also assists in developing an appropriate strategy for degrading and ultimately destroying Daesh.

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